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Lessons for Lent:

OR,

INSTRUCTIONS

ON THE

TWO SACRAMENTS

OF

PENANCE,

AND THE

B. EUCHARIST.

The Second Edition.

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ON THE

Two Sacraments of PENANCE,

AND THE

B. EUCHARIST.

A Preparatory Lesson.

Q. WHY are these Instructions concerning *Confession* and *Communion*, published under the Name of *Lessons for Lent?*

A. Since the Church, in the Holy Time of Lent, invites her Children after

ter a more preſſing manner, to partake in the Graces, which Jeſus Chriſt intended them by theſe Two Sacraments. Inſtructions of this nature, though never unſeaſonable, ought to find among the Faithful a more ready Acceptance in theſe Days of Penance.

Q. Do you then deſire to be thoroughly inſtructed in all that belongs to theſe two Sacraments?

A. I hope I deſire it.

Q. Why do you deſire it?

A. Becauſe I am ſtrictly obliged to know the Method I muſt take, to approach theſe Sacraments as I ought.

Q. From whence ariſes this ſtrict Obligation?

A. From the Nature of the Sacraments themſelves; they being deſigned by Jeſus Chriſt, the one, to re-inſtate me in his Favour, when I have loſt it by my Sins; the other, to preſerve me from Relapſes, which would put me in great Danger of loſing my Soul.

Q. Would it then be a Sin to neglect Inſtructions of this Nature?

A. Moſt certainly. For by ſuch a Neglect, I ſhould grievouſly ſin againſt the Goodneſs of God; againſt the Merits of Jeſus Chriſt; againſt my own Soul; and againſt the Sacraments.

Q. How

Q. How would it be a Sin against the Goodness of God?

A. For as much as it would argue a Contempt of the Means God's Goodness has provided for my Salvation.

Q. Why would it be a Sin against the Merits of Jesus Christ?

A. It were effectually to stop the two main Channels by which the Virtue of his Death and Passion is to be conveyed into my Soul.

Q. How should you sin against your own Soul?

A. Being guilty of many Sins, and in continual Danger of increasing their Number, I cannot save my Soul, but by worthily approaching to these Two Sacraments: Whereas I shall certainly approach Unworthily, unless I be well acquainted with the right Method of receiving them.

Q. Why do you say, that the Neglect of Instructions of this Nature, would be a Sin against the Sacraments?

A. If I know not what is required for the worthy Receiving of them, as often as I presume to come to them, I shall be in great danger of failing in some necessary Disposition, and by consequence, of committing a Sacrilege by profaning them.

Q. As to what Points then do you desire to be instructed concerning the Sacrament of *Penance*?

A. In all the Essentials of a good Confession, and a solid Conversion; to wit, 1. The Examination of Conscience; 2. Contrition; 3. Resolution of Amendment; 4. Confession; 5. Absolution; 6. Satisfaction.

Q. Why, as to these Particulars?

A. Because a Failure in any of them may either render my Confessions invalid; or be an Argument of their having been so; and besides the Sacrilege, would lay me under a Necessity of repeating them.

Q. And what would you know, as to *Communion*?

A. 1. In what manner I ought to prepare for it. 2*dly*, How I may best entertain my Saviour, when I have received him. 3*dly*, How often I may approach to this sacred Banquet.

PART

PART I.

Of the Sacrament of PENANCE.

LESSON I.

Of the Examination of Conscience.

§ 1.

Q. WHAT is the first Thing you have to do, in preparing for Confession?

A. In the first Place, by an humble and fervent Prayer, I am to beg of Almighty God, *Light* and *Grace*, to know my Sins, to have a true Repentance of them, and a sincere Resolution of Amendment.

Q. Where's the Necessity of such a Prayer?

A. The two great Effects of Sin upon our Souls, are a Blindness of Understanding, and a Hardness of Heart. And these are not to be removed, but by the Grace of God, which is given only to such as ask it, as they ought.

Q. Having made this Prayer, what's to be done next?

A. I

A. I am then to set my Sins before me, by considering the Seven Capital Sins, the Commandments of God, and those of his Church, and the Maxims of the Gospel.

Q. What other Way may you come to a Knowledge of your Sins?

A. By reflecting where, with whom, and in what Business I have been conversant, since my last Confession; and examining how far I have sinned against God, my Neighbours, or myself, in all the Ways 'tis possible for one to sin.

Q. How many Ways may one sin against God, ones Neighbour, or ones Self?

A. Five Ways. 1. By taking Pleasure in deliberate Thoughts; *2dly*, By Desires; *3dly*, By Words; *4thly*, By Actions; or *5thly*, by Omissions.

Q. Is it enough to inquire into such Sins, as every Body is capable of committing?

A. No, it is not. I must take particular Care to examine myself, as to those Failings and Miscarriages, which are incident to Persons of my Age, or Sex, or Condition.

Q. When it appears, that you have sinn'd Mortally in any Kind, what are you farther to inquire after?

A. I

A. I must inquire into the *Number* of each Kind of Sin, and likewise into the *Motives* and *Circumstances* of Time, Place, Persons, manner of committing it, which may happen to change its Nature, or *considerably increase its Malice*. *Monsieur* Meaux *Instruct. particul. sur les Sacremens, Leçon 4. P. Nepveu, S. J. Conduite Chretienne*, ch. 11. p. 179, 182. *P. Houdry, S. J. Bibl. des Pred. tom. 2. p. 243.*

Q. But what if a Person has for several Months or Years neglected the Sacraments, and all that Time been habituated to some certain Sins? How shall he guess at the Number of them?

A. In such a Case, he must first consider, for what Term of Time he was addicted to those Sins; and then, how often in a Day, or Week, or Month, he might generally speaking, fall into them.

§ 2.

Q. With what Care are you to make this Examination?

A. With a moral Care and Diligence.

Q. What mean you by a *moral Diligence?*

A. I mean such a Degree of Diligence, as should be used in a Matter of Moment.

Q. How

Q. How much Time is to be ſpent in this Examination?

A. More or leſs, according to the Diſtance of our Confeſſions, to the Care and Concern we have for our Salvation, and to the Uſe we make of our Night Examinations.

Q. Are many faulty, as to the firſt Point?

A. A great many.

Q. And how comes this to paſs?

A. Some make their Examinations too ſhort, and ſome too long.

Q. Who are too ſhort in this Duty?

A. Too many of thoſe, who lead a worldly and diſtracted Life, and who ſeldom go to Confeſſion.

Q. What Space of Time then is required for this Examination, of ſuch as ſeldom confeſs, and poſſibly never but at *Eaſter*?

A. More than perhaps one in ten of them beſtows upon it.

Q. How do you mean?

A. It is to be feared, ſuch Perſons commonly confine their Scrutiny to two or three Quarters of an Hour; whereas ſeveral Hours, and perhaps ſome Days in Retirement, would now and then be little enough for it. *P. Nepveu S. J. Conduite, P. 2. c. 2.*

Q. Well, and what's the Conſequence of this Precipitation?

A. By this affected and wilful Negligence, it often happens that ſome grievous Sin, or *aggravating Circumſtance* eſcapes their Memory, for which they muſt ſtand accountable at God's Tribunal. *P. Nepveu. ibid.*

Q. Now, who are generally too long?

A. Scrupulous Perſons.

Q. What Harm do the Scrupulous by too long Examinations?

A. They weary their Spirits, diſtract their Minds, darken and overcloud their Conſciences, and leave little or no Time, or Vigour of Mind, for *Contrition*, which ought to be their chief Concern.

Q. But who are ſcrupulous?

A. They that diſturb their Conſciences with imaginary Difficulties.

Q. Is every body ſcrupulous that takes himſelf to be ſo?

A. No. They that of themſelves think they are ſcrupulous, are frequently far otherwiſe.

Q. Are they then ſcrupulous who imagine themſelves free from that Weakneſs?

A. The

A. The moſt ſcrupulous are commonly of all others the hardeſt to be perſuaded, that they are ſcrupulous at all.

Q. What Perſons have Reaſons to think themſelves ſo?

A. Thoſe whom their ſpiritual Phyſician judges to lie under this Infirmity.

Q. What Rule then may be given for the Length or Shortneſs of Time to be ſpent in this Examination?

A. The ſureſt Rule, is the Advice of a good Director.

LESSON II.

Of Contrition.

§ 1.

Q. AFTER you have uſed a moral Diligence in ſeeking out the Number and chief Circumſtances of your Sins, what are you in the next Place to do?

A. I muſt then endeavour to conceive a true *Deteſtation* of them, and Sorrow for them. And ſo for any other Sin or Sins of my Life paſt, which I intend to confeſs.

Q. How

Q. How is this *Sorrow* called?

A. 'Tis called *Contrition.*

Q. What means the Word *Contrition?*

A. Contrition is the ſame as *cruſhing* or *bruiſing* to Pieces. As when a Stone is bruis'd, and in a manner reduc'd to Powder.

Q. What underſtand you then by a *Contrite Heart?*

A. A Heart, which was harden'd before, but is now as it were, cruſh'd and bruis'd with a Sorrow for its Sins.

Q. Why does the Scripture make uſe of the Word *Contrition?*

A. To let us underſtand, how a true penitent Heart is chang'd from what it was.

Q. What Conditions are requir'd to a true Contrition?

A. Three principal Conditions, *viz.* That it be, 1. *Supernatural*, 2. *Sovereign*, 3. *Univerſal.*

§ 2.

Q. What mean you by *ſupernatural?*

A. I mean, our Sorrow muſt proceed from an Actual Grace and Impulſe of the H. Ghoſt; and from the Conſideration of ſome Truth, which our Faith teaches us: eſpecially from this, that

our Sins are Offences againſt our good God.

Q. What therefore ought to be your firſt Care, in order to procure a true Contrition?

A. Before I begin to conſider the Motives, which may help to excite my Heart to a juſt Sorrow; I muſt beg this Sorrow of God, with all poſſible Fervour and Devotion.

Q. In what Senſe, muſt your Contrition be *Sovereign?*

A. That is to ſay, I am to deteſt Sin, as the greateſt and ſovereign *Evil*, becauſe 'tis oppoſite to God, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sovereign *Good*. And by conſequence my Sorrow for having Offended him, muſt alſo regard Sin as the greateſt of Evils.

Q. And muſt this Sorrow for your Sins, be ſenſibly greater than any other?

A. There's no Neceſſity of its being always ſenſibly greater, 'tis ſufficient, that it be a Sorrow for Sin, as the greateſt of Evils.

Q. May all then, that approach to Confeſſion, hope they have a true and ſovereign Sorrow, though it be not any ways *ſenſible?*

A. The Converſion of ſuch, as have been engag'd in great Diſorders, and in habitual

habitual Sins, is ſeldom ſincere, unleſs it begin with ſome ſalutary Agitations and Troubles of Mind. *P. Cheminais, S. J. tom. 2. Serm. ſur la Feſte de Paſques, Partie 2.*

Q. What Reaſon is there to queſtion the Sincerity of Converſion in habitual Sinners, when their Contrition is not ſenſible?

A. One Reaſon is this, that all the Converſions of ſuch Sinners, which the Holy Scripture and the Church have recommended to our Imitation, not only affected the Heart in a ſenſible Manner, but appear'd outwardly in Sighs and Tears. *P. Cheminais, ibid.* See Pſalm Pœnit. S. Mat. 26. v. 75. S. Luke, 7. v. 37, 44. c. 15. 18. c. 18. 13. c. 23. 41. Act. 2. 37.

Q. Is it expedient, that the Penitent make Compariſons between Sin and other Evils, and ſay, for Example, "I "deteſt Sin more than Infamy, Death, "or Hell; I had rather have loſt my Re-"putation, my Friends, &c. than the "Grace of God; I'll rather ſuffer this "or that Miſery, than offend him," or the like?

A. No. It is not adviſable to make any ſuch Compariſons.

Q. By what means then are you to excite this *ſovereign* Sorrow?

A. By a due Consideration of proper Motives.

Q. When may your Contrition be said to be *universal?*

A. When it extends itself to all the Mortal Sins of which I am guilty.

Q. Must it of Necessity be *universal?*

A. It must. For neither will God forgive me one or more Mortal Sins, without forgiving all; nor can I possibly have a true Sorrow for some, and not for others.

§ 3.

Q. What if you cannot find you have committed any other than *Venial* Sins, since you were last absolved?

A. In such a Case, my Sorrow must at least be extended to some one Venial Sin in particular.

Q. Why so?

A. Because unless I have a true Contrition for some or other of those Venial Sins, which I design to make the whole Matter of my Confession, I shall inevitably abuse the Sacrament, and commit a Sacrilege.

Q. Is it not harder to have a sovereign Sorrow for Venial Sins, than for Mortal?

A. Much

A. Much harder for the generality of Chriſtians.

Q. Why is it much harder?

A. Becauſe it is a Sorrow for having offended God even in ſmall Matters, with a firm Reſolution of not offending in like Manner for the Future. A Diſpoſition rarely to be found amongſt tepid Chriſtians.

Q. If then upon examining the State of your Soul ſince your laſt Abſolution, nothing ſhould occur to your Memory, but Sins of Frailty, what wou'd you do to have ſufficient Matter of Contrition and Abſolution?

A. I wou'd call to mind ſome Sin or Sins in my Life paſt, which, with the Help of God's Grace, might be apt to excite in my Soul a lively Sorrow, and wou'd make them the chief Subject of my Contrition and Confeſſion, *P. Nepveu, S. J. Cond. Chret. Part* 1. ch. 11. p. 180.

Q. Ought you in ſuch a Caſe to content yourſelf with reflecting in general upon the *Untruths*, or *Diſtractions* in Prayer, or ſuch other Failings of your paſt Life?

A. I would rather ſpecify ſomething, which may humble me in the Sight of God. *P. Nepveu, ibid.*

Q. Is this uſual?

A. 'Tis the Practice of many good Chriſtians, who take for a Maxim, thoſe Words of the Holy Penitent *Ezechias*, *Recogitabo tibi omnes annos meos, in amaritudine animæ meæ:* "I will reflect in "thy Preſence on all my paſt Years, in "the Bitterneſs of my Soul." *Iſai.* 38. v. 15.

§ 4.

Q. How are Perſons, who have hitherto liv'd after a worldly and ſenſual Manner, to excite themſelves to Contrition.

A. By the Exerciſe of their Faith, they muſt endeavour to move their Hearts, 1. To a *Fear* of God's Judgments; 2*dly*, to a *Confidence* in his Mercy; 3*dly*, to a *Love* of his Goodneſs; 4*thly*, to a *Sorrow* for having ſinn'd againſt him.

Q. How may a Penitent excite himſelf to a *Fear* of God?

A. By conſidering him as a juſt and omnipotent Judge, who has puniſh'd Sin, 1. in the Angels; 2*dly*, in *Adam* and his Poſterity; 3*dly*, by an univerſal Deluge; 4*thly*, by Fire from Heaven on Sodom; 5*thly*, by everlaſting Torments in Hell; 6*thly*, on Calvary, in the Death of his beloved Son.

Q. How

Q. How to a Confidence in God?

A. By considering, 1. that his Mercy is above all his Works, and greater than our Iniquity. *Psal.* 144. v. 8, 9. S. *Mat.* 8. 2.

2*dly*, That he promises Pardon to all that sincerely seek it. S. *Mat.* 7. v. 8. S. *John* 16. v. 23. *Ezech.* 18. v. 21, 22, 23.

3*dly*, That he invites us to return to his Favour, *Ezech.* 18. v. 31, 32. S. *Luke*, 5. v. 32. S. *Mat.* 11. v. 28.

4*thly*, That he gave his only Son for our Redemption. S. *John*, 3. v. 14, 15, 16, 17.

5*thly*, That our Saviour has instituted the Sacrament of Penance, for the Sake of Sinners.

6*thly*, That he himself is our Advocate in Heaven, 1 *John* 2. v. 1.

7*thly*, That a great many enormous Sinners have obtain'd Mercy.

Q. How to a *Love* of God?

A. By considering, 1. Almighty God as the Source of Sanctity and Justification, who justifies Sinners *Gratis*, and out of pure Mercy, *Rom.* 3. v. 24. *Gal.* 3. 13.

2*dly*, His Benefits of Creation, Redemption, and Conservation.

3*dly*. His Patience in suffering and bearing with our Ingratitude to this Moment,

Moment, S. *Mat.* 18. v. 27. *Rom.* 2. v. 4. 1 *Tim.* 1. v. 16. 2 *Pet.* 3. v. 9.

4*thly*, His Goodneſs in calling and exciting us, by his Threats, and Promiſes, and Inſpirations.

5*thly*, His Bounty in being ready to pardon us, and even to reward the Fruits of our Repentance with a Crown of Glory, S. *Luke*, 15. 20.

Q. Will an Act of *Love* upon theſe Motives, incline us to an Act of *Sorrow* and *Contrition?*

A. It will, by the Help of Divine Grace.

Q. Why ſo?

A. Becauſe as a great Love of any thing naturally breeds in us an Averſion to its oppoſite; ſo the *Love of God*, when once our Hearts are inflamed with it, cannot fail of producing a *Hatred to Sin*, which is ſo directly oppoſite to him, and a *Sorrow* for having committed it.

§ 5.

Q. May not a Penitent content himſelf with Motives and an Act of *Fear*, without proceeding to an Act of *Love?*

A. The late Biſhop of *Meaux*, Monſieur *Boſſuet*, one of the moſt learned Prelates of his Time, declares, that ſuch Penitents

Penitents as content themſelves with *Fear* in preparing for Confeſſion, without exciting their Hearts to a *Love* of God, have not a ſufficient Care of their Salvation, becauſe they depend on a doubtful Opinion, *Catech. 2 Inſtruct. Particul. ſur les Sacr. Leçon 2 & 3.*

Q. But is not this Biſhop too ſtrict and ſingular in this Opinion?

A. Not at all. *P. Cheminais S. J.* Preacher in Ordinary to the King of *France* tells us, that a *Love of Preference*, whereby we love God more than ourſelves, and hate our Sins more than their Cauſes and Effects, "*is ſo eſſential a* "*Part of our Sorrow, that it muſt never* "*be wanting,*" whether our Contrition be perfect or imperfect. *Serm. ſur la Penitence de Magdelaine, tom. 1. & Serm. ſur la Feſte de Paſques, Partie 2. tom. 2.*

Q. How do ſuch as content themſelves with an Act of *Fear*, depend on a doubtful Opinion?

A. For as much as it is a very great doubt, whether without *Love*, the Heart can be really chang'd, or the Penitent truly converted. *S. Aug. Serm. 15, de Verbes Apoſt. c. 6. Serm. 19, c. 8. Edit. Lovan. S. Tho. 3 q. 86, ar. 3. S. Antoninus 4. p. tit. 14. c. 5. S. Fran. Sales of the Love of God, l. 2, ch. 19.*

Q. Why

Q. Why may not *Fear* alone change the Heart, and work a true Converſion?

A. 1ſt, Becauſe he who refrains from Sin, on no other Motives than thoſe of *Fear*, wou'd not ſcruple to commit it, if he cou'd ſecure himſelf from the Puniſhment due to it. As the Fathers teach us.

2dly. Such a Perſon more regards the Damage he fears, than the Injury he does to God, ſo that he makes himſelf the End of his Converſion; whereas God ought to be the End, as he is the Beginning of every good Action, 1 Cor. 10. v. 31.

Q. May not *Fear*, without the Help of *Love*, make God the End of our Converſion?

A. It cannot. For, as there is no turning away from God by Sin, but by *a Love of the Creature*; ſo neither can there be a *ſufficient* turning away or *Converſion* from Sin, but by *loving God*.

Q. All agree, that *Fear* without *Love* cannot work a Converſion ſufficient to Juſtification without the Sacrament; but may not it poſſibly affect it, in conjunction with the Sacrament?

A. It *diſpoſes*, as the Council of *Trent* teaches; but it does not *ſuffice* even with the Sacrament, where Love is wanting.

Q. So that *Attrition* or Imperfect Contrition,

Contrition, which commonly takes its Riſe from the Conſideration of the Shamefulneſs of Sin, or from the Fear of Hell and Puniſhment, muſt advance, I ſuppoſe, to ſome Degree of *Love*, before it can be thought a *ſufficient* Preparation for Confeſſion?

A. It muſt ſo. For *Attrition* will not ſuffice, unleſs it be a *ſovereign* Sorrow, in conſideration of our Sins being the greateſt Evil, becauſe they are oppoſite to God our ſovereign and greateſt good. And, "*for that Reaſon*," ſays P. Nepveu, S. J. "*we muſt have a greater* "*Horrour of Sin, than of* ALL *the great-*"*eſt Evils; and be more ſincerely afflict-*"*ed, for having ſinn'd, and by ſinning loſt* "*Almighty God, than if we had loſt* "*all other Goods, and fall'n under all* "*other Evils.*——*This Diſpoſition*," continues he, "*is* ABSOLUTELY NE-"CESSARY *for the effacing of Sin, and* "*therefore muſt be found in* ATTRITION "*itſelf*, WHICH IS NO SUCH EASY "MATTER, AS SOME WOU'D FALSE-"LY PERSUADE THEMSELVES." Reflect. Chretiennes, Septem. 6. & Conduite Chret. ch. 11. p. 151.

Q. Do theſe Words prove a Neceſſity of *Love*, even in Attrition?

A. Moſt evidently. For, as it wou'd be againſt common Senſe for a Man to ſay,

ſay, he is *ſorry for the Loſs* of any thing, which he loves not in ſome Degree; or that he *hates* Darkneſs, Sickneſs, Infamy, or Poverty, without having at the ſame Time a *Love* for their Oppoſites, Light, Health, Reputation, or Riches; ſo it is not to be conceiv'd, how a Penitent can *hate* Sin, upon Account of its being an *Offence to God*, or how he can be *ſorry for having loſt* by his Sins his Sovereign Good, unleſs this ſame Sovereign Good have ſome, and even the firſt Place in his *Love* and Affection. Since, as every Body knows, an *Hatred* and a *Sorrow* for an *Evil*, is as certainly derived from a *Love* of the contrary *Good*, as a Stream is from its Fountain.

§ 6.

Q. Having made the aforeſaid Acts of *Fear*, *Confidence* and *Love*, how wou'd you proceed to an Act of *Deteſtation* and *Sorrow* for your Sins?

A. I wou'd compare the diſmal Conſequences of my Sins, with that baſe momentary Satisfaction which tempted me to commit them. But chiefly God's Sanctity, Juſtice, Goodneſs, and the many Effects of his Mercy to me, with my Treachery, Contempt, and Rebellion againſt him.

Q. May

Q. May ſuch as are not engag'd in Mortal Sin make uſe of the ſame Method for exciting their Contrition?

A. They may: unleſs the Conſideration of God's Judgments ſhould caſt a Damp upon their Spirits, and abate their Confidence: For then, it were better to employ only Love and Confidence for that End.

Q. Is it neceſſary to make a different Act of Contrition for every Sin?

A. It is not neceſſary. But 'tis certainly very profitable to expreſs our Sorrow for every conſiderable Sin, one by one, and then for altogether. Lat. Frid. § 28.

Q. What Method muſt you take in Caſe you ſhould forget theſe Inſtructions, or find it difficult to make of yourſelf theſe aforeſaid Acts?

A. I muſt provide myſelf with ſome approv'd and ſolid Book of Devotion, and make the Acts out of it.

Q. And as ſoon as you have attentively read over an Act of Contrition, which ſuch a Book ſupplies you with, are you prepar'd for Confeſſion?

A. No ſurely. For more is required to make a true Act of Contrition, than the reading of Words, which expreſs it.

Q. Why ſo?

A. Becauſe an Act of Contrition,

which prepares one for Confeſſion, and for the Remiſſion of his Sins, reſts not on the Tip of the Tongue, nor in the Imagination, or Underſtanding, but is the Language of the Heart.

Q. Where is then the Advantage in reading ſuch Prayers, as in your Manuals are called, *Acts of Contrition?*

A. They put us in mind of the Sentiments which ought to poſſeſs our Hearts, and in ſome Degree help to raiſe them.

Q. How are you to uſe theſe printed *Acts* or *Prayers before Confeſſion*, in order to raiſe Sentiments of Contrition?

A. We ought to read them again and again, till we have reaſon to hope, that the Sentiments of our Hearts, are the ſame as the Words expreſs.

Q. How much Time ſhould be ſpent in exciting Contrition?

A. More or leſs, in proportion to the Concern we have in the Conduct of our Lives, for our Souls' Salvation.

Q. But what is the Rule for Perſons of a timorous or tender Conſcience?

A. The Advice of their Director.

Q. Is it a Fault to be anxious and ſolicitous about the Sincerity of your Contrition, when a good Director adviſes you to the contrary?

A. Doubtleſs; *a great Fault.*

Q. Whence

Q. Whence comes this Anxiety?

A. It commonly proceeds from Self-love, which would be entirely certain in a Matter, where Almighty God will not ſuffer us to be ſo: Or from a ſecret Pride, that's uneaſy under the Humiliation of ſuch an Uncertainty; or in fine from a Want of Confidence in the Mercy of God.

§ 7.

Q. Have you no need of ever making an Act of Contrition, but when you are preparing for Confeſſion?

A. Yes: Whenever I am ſo unhappy as to fall into Mortal Sin, I ought, with the firſt Opportunity, to repent of it. S. *Antonin.* 3. p. tit. 14. cap. 18.

Q. Why ſo?

A. The Scripture inſtructs me ſo to do, when it ſays, "Fly from Sin, as "from the Sight of a Serpent. Be not "ſlow in your Converſion to God, and "delay not it from Day to Day. If to "Day you hear his Voice, harden not "your Hearts." *Eccluſ.* 21, v. 2. ch. 5. v. 8. *Pſalm* 94. v. 8.

Q. Is this Obligation likewiſe grounded in Reaſon?

A. It is. For if an Heretick, upon a ſufficient Conviction of his Errors, be

oblig'd to reconcile himſelf to the Church his Mother; if, after a Breach of fraternal Charity, it be ſtrictly our Duty to make Friends with our Neighbour, and "Not to ſuffer the Sun to ſet upon our "Anger," (*Epheſ.* 4. v. 26) it cannot be doubted, but that the Sinner ought, without delay, to take ſome ſteps towards a Reconciliation with his God and Father.

Q. On what other Occaſion is an Act of Contrition to be made?

A. 1*ſt.* 'Tis of Obligation, when we come into imminent Danger of Death by Sickneſs, or otherwiſe. 2*dly.* When Mortal Sins, not yet confeſs'd, firſt occur to our Memory, 'tis fit we ſhou'd expreſs our Sorrow for them. And 'tis good to do it, even in regard of thoſe which have been confeſs'd.

Q. At what other Times is it adviſeable to renew our Sorrow?

A. 1*ſt.* In our Morning and Night Prayers: 2*dly.* In aſſiſting at the H. Sacrifice of the Maſs: 3*dly.* When we enter upon a Buſineſs of importance, which requires, in a greater Degree, the Divine Aſſiſtance: 4*thly.* When any great Calamity, whether Spiritual or Temporal, falls on ourſelves, or on our Country. *Dan.* 9. v. 15. 19.

LESSON

LESSON III.

Of the Resolution of Amendment.

§ 1.

Q. ARE you sufficiently prepar'd for Absolution, so soon as you have conceiv'd a Sorrow for your Sins?

A. No. I must not only detest them, and be sorry for having committed them; but also make an *absolute* and *efficacious Resolution*, not to commit them for the future. *Conc. Trid. sess.* 4. *c.* 4. *Isai.* 55. *v.* 7. *Ezech.* 18. *v.* 31. S. *Luke*, 15. *v.* 18, 20. *Acts*, 2. *v.* 37, 40, 42.

Q. Is this Resolution necessary?

A. So necessary, that where it is not sincere, our Contrition is false and counterfeit, and our Confession null and sacrilegious.

Q. May not you defer the making of it till you are at your Confessor's Feet.

A. Such late Resolutions are commonly soon broken.

Q. How may a sincere and true Resolution be known?

A. By its Effects. For every good Tree brings forth good Fruit.

Q. What then are the Effects and Marks of a sincere Resolution?

A. If before Confession, I am sincerely resolv'd to amend my Life, and

avoid Sin, I ſhall take Care afterwards; 1. To uſe proper Means for the Amendment of my Life. S. *Luke*, 13. *v.* 8, 9. *2dly.* Not to yield to the Obſtacles, I may find in the way of Virtue. S. *Mat.* 11. *v.* 7. S. *Mark*, 10. *v.* 47, 48. *Numb.* 13. *v.* 29, 33. *ch.* 14. *v.* 3, 4. *3dly.* To ſhun all dangerous Occaſions, which may draw me into Sin. *Joſue*, 24. *v.* 14, 21, 23. *Jud.* 2. *v.* 11. S. *Mat.* 26. *v.* 58.

Q. What, if after Confeſſion, you ſhou'd uſe no Means for reforming your Life, but ſhou'd as eaſily fall into the ſame Sins, as you did before Confeſſion?

A. I may reaſonably apprehend, that my Confeſſion was null and ſacrilegious.

Q. Why ſo?

A. Becauſe ſpeedy and frequent Relapſes generally happen through a Want of a true Reſolution. *P. Nepveu, Reflect. Chret, Jan.* 13. and 16. *P. Cheminais S. J. Serm. ſur la Rechute, Partie.* 1. *tom.* 1.

Q. Are Relapſes always a Sign, that our Reſolutions were not ſincere?

A. Not always.

Q. When are they not a Sign of it?

A. When we uſe our ſincere Endeavours to prevent them; when they happen not ſo ſoon after Confeſſion, or that the Sins, into which we Relapſe, are not grievous.

§ 2.

Q. May you content yourſelf with ſaying, *well, I am reſolv'd never to commit theſe Sins for the future?*

A. No. For ſuch a general Reſolution is commonly to little purpoſe.

Q. What ought you to do further?

A. 1*ſt.* To conſider what Occaſions led me into Sin, and reſolve entirely to decline them. 2*dly.* To make choice of proper Means for the Support of my Weakneſs, and of conquering all Difficulties which may lie in my Way.

Q. But what is the Reaſon, that even real and ſincere Reſolutions are frequently ineffectual?

A. The Reaſon is, that ſuch Reſolutions are grounded on a ſecret Pride and Confidence in one's ſelf.

Q. What then is to be your Care in this Particular?

A. It muſt be my Care in making my Reſolutions of Amendment, 1*ſt.* Not at all to rely on my own Strength or preſent Devotion, but to place my whole Confidence, and that *a lively one*, in the Aſſiſtance of Jeſus Chriſt, my only Saviour and Phyſician; ſaying often to him, in the Words of the Leper; *Domine, ſi vis, potes me mundare.* "Lord, if you will, "you can heal me." S. *Mat.* 8. *v.* 2.

2*dly.*

2dly. To beg with great Humility and Fervour his particular Grace, which may carry me to the Execution of all I have resolv'd on; as the Prophet did, when he said, *Juravi & statui custodire judicia justitiæ tuæ, humiliatus sum usquequaque Domine, vivifica me, secundum verbum tuum. Voluntaria Oris mei beneplacita fac Domine.* "I have, in thy Presence, re- "solv'd to observe thy just Decrees. I "have been humbled, O Lord, on all "Sides, but make me live according to "thy Promises; make acceptable what "my Mouth does voluntarily offer to "thee." *Psal.* 118. *v.* 106. *3dly.* It is well to beg this Grace, by the Intercession of the Saint, whose Feast we are to keep; or who was present at the Mystery of our Saviour, which is to be celebrated.

LESSON IV.

Of Confession.

§ 1.

Q. WHAT are the Conditions of a good Confession?

A. 1. That it be *Humble*; 2. *Clear*; 3. *Entire*; 4. as *Short* as may be.

Q. Why ought your Confession to be *humble?*

A. Because, when I go to confess my Sins,

Sins, I approach as a Criminal to the Tribunal of Jeſus Chriſt, to ſue for Mercy: and a proud Offender deſerves to find none.

Q. When have you Reaſon to fear your Confeſſion is not *humble?*

A. When I go with a good Opinion of myſelf: when I am obſtinate in my own Judgment, or reject the Orders and Advice of my Confeſſor: when I deſire to be eſteem'd or reſpected by him: when I excuſe my Sins, or throw the Fault on others, or confeſs them in a confident manner, or that I take myſelf to be worthy of Abſolution.

Q. Why ought your Confeſſion to be *clear?*

A. A Cauſe muſt always be expos'd in clear Terms to the Judge who hears it; and a Diſeaſe to the Phyſician who is to cure it. Now, my Confeſſor is both my Judge and my Phyſician.

Q. When are you defective in this Point?

A. When I fail to declare my Sins in ſuch a Manner as to make them appear the ſame to my Confeſſor, as I know them to be in my own Conſcience, and in the ſight of God.

Q. What if you ſhould ſo diſguiſe a Mortal Sin, as to make it ſeem but venial to your Confeſſor?

A. I

A. I shou'd render my Confession invalid and sacrilegious.

Q. In case you doubt, whether you have deliberately yielded to a mortal Sin, or not; may not you, for Security sake, say absolutely that you have committed it?

A. By no Means. For it would make my Confessor mistake the State of my Soul, and make him think there is before him a certain and sufficient Matter of Absolution, when perhaps in Reality there is not.

Q. What then are you to do in such doubtful Cases?

A. As the Sins which I have certainly committed, must be confess'd as certain; so doubtful Sins must be confess'd as doubtful.

Q. What's to be done, if nothing occur to your Memory since your last Confession, but what is doubtful, whether it be a Sin, or no Sin?

A. In such a Case, if I desire Absolution, I must excite my Sorrow for some undoubted Sin of my Life past, and confess it.

Q. Were it a Fault to say somewhat in your Confession, for the clearing of your own Conscience, which discovers your Neighbour's Sin?

A. A great Fault; save only where the

the Grievouſneſs of my own Sins, which are *mortal*, cannot otherwiſe be ſufficiently expreſs'd. S. *Tho. Opoſc.* 12. *q.* 6. *Lugo S. J. art.* 16. *n.* 394. *Suarez Vaſquez, Leſſius, S. J.*

§ 2.

Q. In what Senſe do you ſay, your Confeſſion muſt be *entire?*

A. I mean, I am not to conceal any one mortal Sin: nor any thing which is neceſſary to declare the Grievouſneſs of it.

Q. What harm would there be in ſuch a Concealment?

A. It were in Effect to provoke God's Juſtice at the very Tribunal of his Mercy, and to ſhut the Gate of Heaven more cloſely againſt me, when God's Miniſter is ready with S. *Peter's* Keys to open it to me, by adding the Sin of an enormous Sacrilege to all I was guilty of before Confeſſion, *Dan.* 5. v. 2. *Acts,* 5. v. 3. *Heb.* 10. v. 29.

Q. What muſt you do to make your Confeſſion entire?

A. I muſt expreſs the *Nature* and *Number* of all the mortal Sins I have committed; and likewiſe all the *Circumſtances* of Time, Place, Perſons, or Effects, which ſeem *conſiderably to increaſe*

creaſe the Malice of each Sin. *S. Charles Borromæus, Inſtruc.* c. 12. *Cat. Trid.* §. 41. *P. Nepveu, Condai.* p. 182.

Q. In caſe your Confeſſor ſhould think it neceſſary, for the better Underſtanding of the preſent State of your Conſcience, to aſk ſome Queſtions concerning Sins formerly confeſs'd, are you obliged to let him know the Truth?

A. I am ſtrictly obliged. *Tamburin S. J. c.* 10. §. 2. *Buſſenbaum, S. J. l.* 6. *trant.* 4. *c.* 1, *Dub.* 3. *art.* 3. *Card. Lugo S. J.*

Q. If then any mortal Sin, which you are to confeſs, be *habitual*, are you to ſignify ſo much to your Confeſſor?

A. Yes, I muſt tell him it is *habitual*; unleſs he be my ordinary Confeſſor, who knows it to be ſuch from my former Confeſſions. *P. Nepveu, lond.* ch. 11. p. 184.

Q. Were you tempted to conceal a mortal Sin through Shame, how would you arm yourſelf againſt the Temptation?

A. With this Reflection. That my Confeſſor holding the Place of Jeſus Chriſt, who mercifully died for the very Sin I am to confeſs, and being likewiſe himſelf a Sinner, will not fail in this Tribunal of Chriſt's Mercy, to compaſſionate my Weakneſs; neither will he be vex'd to find I have ſinned.

Q. Can

Q. Can the Confeſſing of any Sin leſſen your Reputation with your Confeſſor?

A. Not at all. On the contrary, a good Confeſſor has always an Eſteem for an humble Penitent, and admires the Power of God's Grace, which ſo ſweetly draws him to Repentance.

Q. May you reaſonably be afraid to confeſs your Sins, leſt your Confeſſor ſhould ſpeak of them to yourſelf, or to others?

A. ſuch a Fear were altogether unreaſonable. For he is *ſtrictly oblig'd* by the Laws of the Church, of Nature, and of God, *not to give the leaſt Information*; no, not ſo much as of any one Venial Sin which I confeſs, to any Perſon whatever, nor even to myſelf; out of Confeſſion.

Q. By what other Motives may you overcome this Shame of diſcloſing your Sins?

A. By conſidering: 1*ſt.* That I ſhall certainly loſe my Soul unleſs I confeſs. 2*dly.* That the Sin, which I am aſhamed to confeſs to one ſingle Perſon, will, at the Day of Judgment, if I now conceal it, be publiſh'd by my offended Judge; not only to my Confeſſor, but to all the Saints and Holy Angels, to all the Devils and reprobate Souls,—and this to my everlaſting Shame and Sorrow. *Joſue*, 6. *v.* 5, 17, 18. *ch.* 7. *v.* 1, 5, 11, 12, 15,

21, 24. 3*dly*. That this conceal'd Sin will be a perpetual Weight on my Mind, and will frighten me upon every Accident, with dismal Thoughts of Death and Judgment, and Damnation. 4*thly*. That in fine, if I do not now confess it, in all probability, I never shall.

Q. Why is it probable, that the Sin conceal'd, will never hereafter be confess'd?

A. 1*st*. Because if I now am asham'd to disclose it, I shall certainly be much more asham'd to confess it, together with so many more of the same nature, into which it will draw me, and so many sacrilegious Confessions and Communions which will follow from it. 2*dly*. God threatens to deprive unrepenting Sinners of Time and Grace to reconcile themselves to him: And those Persons have very great Reason to expect these dreadful Judgments, who increase their Sins, by abusing the very Sacrament of Reconciliation. *Eccluſ*. 5. *v*. 8. S. *Mat*. 5. *v*. 25. S. *Luke*, 3. *v*. 9. *ch*. 19. *v*. 42. *Heb*. 6. *v*. 8.

§ 3.

Q. Why ought your Confession to be as *short* as possible?

A. For my own, my Confessor's, and my Neighbour's sake.

Q. Why

Q. Why for your own ſake?

A. Becauſe, if I lengthen my Confeſſion with a long Enumeration of venial Failings, I ſhall weaken my Reſolution of Amendment as to my predominant Sins and Imperfections; and ſhall likewiſe be in danger of confeſſing many Frailties without any Sorrow for them.

Q. Why for your Confeſſor's ſake?

A. A Confeſſion, which is drawn out to an unreaſonale length, either by being ſilent, or by an idle crowd of Scruples or human Frailties, or by frivolous Circumlocutions and general Accuſations, or by tacking to every Sin a Train of unneceſſary Circumſtances, or by diſputing the Caſe, or queſtioning the Confeſſor's Attention or Underſtanding; I ſay ſuch a Confeſſion is apt to weaken the Confeſſor's Memory and Attention, and to caſt ſuch a Miſt before his Eyes, as renders him incapable of making a right Judgment of the State of my Soul.

Q. Why muſt your Confeſſion be ſhort, for your Neighbour's ſake?

A. 1ſt. Becauſe a long Confeſſion is likely to put others in a Fret, who are wearied with expecting to go after me. *2dly.* To fill weak Souls with Scruples and Apprehenſions of their Confeſſions being defective, when probably they are

full as long as they need be. 3*dly*. To give Occaſion of Scandal and Offence to all, that find me no more perfect in my Life and Converſation, than others who are much ſhorter, notwithſtanding the great Stir I make with my long Conferences and Confeſſions.

Q. What Care then will you take to reduce your Confeſſions to a juſt Meaſure?

A. I'll endeavour, 1*ſt*. To go currently on, without heſitating or being ſilent. 2*dly*. To avoid all *general* Expreſſions and tedious Circumlocutions, and to content myſelf with declaring in the feweſt Words I can, the *Particulars* I have to confeſs. 3*dly*. To add the *Number* of each Sin, as nearly as I can gueſs, without putting my Confeſſor to the Trouble and coſt of Time to aſk it. 4*thly*. As to venial Imperfections, to confeſs only the *moſt material*, when the recounting all of them would make me tedious.

Q. But what if one ſhould not know which of them are the moſt material, and therefore be afraid omitting what ought chiefly to be mentioned?

A. When my Confeſſor has *once* told me that ſuch and ſuch Imperfections are venial, and that I ſhould do better to omit them; it would be an unpardon-

able Folly in me to be ſtill tormenting myſelf, and him with a needleſs Rehearſal of them.

§ 4.

Q. With what Sentiments are you to approach to Confeſſion?

A. With the Humility and Confuſion of an hitherto rebellious Subject, of an unfaithful Steward, or of a prodigal Child, ready to appear before my King, my Lord, my Father in the Perſon of my Confeſſor. S. *Luke*, 19. *v.* 14, 20, 22, 27. S. *Mat.* 25. *v.* 18, 26, 30. S. *Luke*, 16. *v.* 1, 2. *ch.* 15. *v.* 13, 19, 21.

Q. Ought a Penitent to terrify himſelf by ſuch Reflections?

A. Such as have liv'd under the Guilt of Mortal Sin, ought to excite this Fear. But not ſo far as to forget that this is a Tribunal of Favour and Mercy.

Q. With what other Sentiments may you entertain yourſelf?

A. I may conſider myſelf as one ſpiritually blind, infirm, unclean, or wounded, or in want; and approach to Jeſus, in the Perſon of my Confeſſor, as to my Guide, my Phyſician, my Support, &c.

Q. How are you to be dreſs'd when you go to Confeſſion?

A. According to the ſtrict Rules of Chriſtian Modeſty and Decency, without Gloves or Muff—Men without their Swords—Women with their Hoods over their Eyes, and their Necks cover'd.

Q. In what manner are you to kneel?

A. Never otherwiſe than by my Confeſſor's Side; and in ſuch a manner, that neither I can look him in the Face, nor he me.

Q. And then how do you begin?

A. Firſt, having made the Sign of the Croſs, I ſay, *Benedic Pater, quia peccavi*, i. e. *Bleſs me, Father, for I have ſinn'd.* And then in ſecret, I beg of God to hear his Prayer for me, that I may make a *humble* and *entire* Confeſſion.

Q. When your Confeſſor has made his Prayer for you, what do you next?

A. I ſay *Confiteor, &c.* as far as *mea Culpa*: or, in Engliſh, *I confeſs, &c.* as far as, *Through my Fault*: And then, *I accuſe myſelf that ſince my laſt Confeſſion, which was on* ſuch a Day, I *have* done ſo and ſo.

Q. But what if your Confeſſor, the laſt Time you confeſs'd, thought it requiſite to delay your Abſolution?

A. In that Caſe I muſt begin thus:

I accuſe

I accuse myself of all the Sins which I confess'd to you before, from which I was not then absolv'd; and then, *I accuse myself, that since my last Confession, &c.*

Q. But if your present Confessor be not the Person who deferr'd your Absolution, what's to be done then?

A. If I go to another Confessor, I am oblig'd to confess to him every particular Mortal Sin, from which I have not yet been absolv'd.

Q. Why so?

A. Because my Confessor, who is my Judge, can only absolve me from the Sins he hears.

§5.

Q. Is it necessary to say, *I accuse myself*, as to every Sin which is to be confess'd?

A. No. 'Tis sufficient to have said it once at the beginning.

Q. Or must you add after every Sin, *I ask God pardon—I am heartily sorry for it*, or the like?

A. There's no necessity of any such Expressions. And, generally, speaking 'tis better to omit them, for fear of spending the Confessor's Time; which, perhaps, though never so well manag'd, will

will be ſhort enough for the Number he has to hear.

Q. Would you begin with the leaſt or greateſt Sins?

A. With the greateſt, and with thoſe I am moſt aſhamed to confeſs.

Q. Why ſo?

A. To overcome my ſpiritual Enemy, and for fear he ſhould induce me to conceal them, by increaſing my Shame and Baſhfulneſs.

Q. If finding nothing ſince your laſt Confeſſion, but human Frailties, you have a mind to confeſs ſome Sins of your former Life; in what Place will you confeſs them?

A. Either in the Beginning or End of my Confeſſion, after this Manner: *I accuſe myſelf that in my Life paſt I have been guilty of*, ſuch or ſuch a Sin.

Q. When you have confeſs'd all you know, is it proper to deſire your Confeſſor to help you by ſuch Queſtions, as he may judge convenient?

A. 'Tis very proper ſo to do. For, 1*ſt*. few Chriſtians are ſo well inſtructed as not to be ignorant of ſome important Duties, or ſo entirely diveſted of Self-love, as not to cheriſh, unawares, ſome darling Paſſion. And for this Reaſon, *You muſt dive into the Bottom of their Conſcience*, ſays S. *Fran. Xavier*, in his Inſtructions

ſtructions to Confeſſors, *and by examination draw out of them, what themſelves know not.* Life of S. *Fran. Xavier, l.* 4. *p.* 369. 2*dly.* A ſincere Penitent cannot but deſire all poſſible Helps, in order to get clear of the Burthen of his Sins: And will be therefore in the Diſpoſition of H. *David*, when he ſaid, "Prove me, O Lord! and know my "Heart; examine and take Cognizance "of my Paths; and ſee if the Way of "Iniquity be in me, and conduct me in "the everlaſting Way." *Pſalm* 138. *v.* 23, 24.

Q. After all has been confeſs'd, how do you conclude?

A. In theſe or the like Words: *For theſe and all my other Sins, which I cannot now call to mind, I am ſorry, and beg Pardon of Almighty God; and I reſolve by his Grace, never more to offend him.* And then thrice beating my Breaſt, I ſay, *Mea Culpa, &c.* or, *Through my Fault, &c.*

Q. What, if after you have thus concluded, ſome Mortal Sin occur to your Memory; or one, which you doubt may be Mortal?

A. I muſt immediately declare it, before I receive either Penance or Abſolution.

Q. But while your Confeſſor is giving you Advice, or ſuggeſting to you

freſh

freſh Motives of Contrition, ought you to be examining, whether you have forgotten any Sin?

A. By no means. For that were giving Way to a Deceipt of the Enemy.

Q. What Deceipt can there be in it?

A. My ſpiritual Enemy, by putting me on ſuch unneceſſary Searches, would endeavour to fruſtrate all the Good, God deſigns me, by what my Confeſſor is recommending to me.

Q. What then are you to do, while your Confeſſor is ſpeaking to you?

A. I am diligently to attend to all he ſays, for our Saviour's ſake, who tells us (S. *Luke* 10. *v.* 16.) that *ſuch as hear the Paſtors of the Church, hear him*, which is particularly to be obſerv'd at Confeſſion.

LESSON V.

Of Sacramental Penance.

Q. WHAT kind of Penance muſt you expect from your Confeſſor?

A. I expect he will comply with the Council of *Trent*, by impoſing ſuch a Penance, as may be not only a Preſervative againſt Sin for the future, but alſo a proportionable Puniſhment for Sins committed. *Seſſ.* 14. *ch.* 8.

Q. What

Q. What ſort of Penances do you take to be Preſervatives againſt future Sins?

A. To enjoin, for Example, *Alms*, to Perſons guilty of Avarice, Falſe Dealing, and the like Sins; faſting to ſuch as have broken *Lent*: *Corporal Auſterities* to Men of Pleaſure, &c.

Q. In what Senſe has the Penance to bear a Proportion to the Sins committed?

A. It muſt bear a Proportion, 1*ſt*. To the Heinouſneſs of the Sins: 2*dly*. To their Continuance: 3*dly*. To the Quality and Nature of them, *P. Nepveu Cond. Chret. ch.* 11. *p.* 188.

Q. What if your Confeſſor ſhould give you but a ſlight Penance for grievous Sins?

A. He would ſtand accountable for my Sins.

Q. And muſt public Sinners expect a Penance proportion'd to their Sins?

A. I would not diſpute with my Confeſſor about this, ſince the Counoil of *Trent* declares, that in ſome Caſes, according to St. *Paul*, ſuch Sinners muſt be enjoined a public Penance. *Seſſ.* 24 *de Reform. cap.* 8. 1 *Tim.* 5. *v.* 20, 24.

Q. Why ſo?

A. That their good Example may recall thoſe to the Way of Virtue, whom they

they ſeduc'd by their bad Example. Conc. *Trid. ibid.*

Q. Is there no diſpenſing with this Rule?

A. The Council leaves it to the Biſhop's Conſcience, to do what he ſhall think moſt expedient. *Ibid.*

Q. May you refuſe to accept the Penance impos'd, if it be not to your liking?

A. By no means. The Patient, or the Criminal, who loves his Life, will ſubmit to any thing conducive to its Preſervation. And to refuſe a Penance, were a great Sign, I underſtand not the Grievouſneſs of my Sins, nor what a Favour it is, to be preſerv'd from Hell: So that ſuch a Perverſeneſs were a ſufficient Argument of my being indiſpoſed for Abſolution.

Q. But if it be a Penance of ſo much difficulty, that by reaſon of your Weakneſs or preſent Circumſtances you fear you ſhall fail of performing it, may not you repreſent your Difficulties to your Confeſſor?

A. In ſuch a Caſe, I have not only the Liberty, but an Obligation of laying the Matter before him, with due Humility and Submiſſion. And this done, I am then to acquieſce in his Deciſion.

Q. How

Q. How are you to receive your Penance?

A. With ſentiments of Humility, Love, and Gratitude.

Q. Are not you to expreſs your Acceptance of the Penance?

A. I am, by ſaying *Yes*, or ſomething of that Nature.

LESSON VI.

Of Abſolution.

§ 1.

Q. WHAT are to be your Sentiments as to *Abſolution?*

A. I am to look upon it as a pure Mercy of Almighty God, and by conſequence can have no right to exact it of my Confeſſor, who holds his Place. I am not to reſemble the proud Phariſee, in thinking myſelf worthy of Conſideration, but the humble Publican; and to reflect with myſelf, that being a Sinner, I have no Title of myſelf to ſo great a Favour.

Q. But don't you think the Confeſſor is a *Rigoriſt*, and too ſevere, who ſometimes finds occaſion to delay your Abſolution?

A. To pass so hard a Censure on him, were certainly an Offence to J. Christ, who declares that the true Way to Heaven is narrow, and has empower'd the Ministers of his Church, as well to *retain* Sins, as to pardon them. S. *John* 20. *v.* 23. S. *Mat.* 18. *v.* 18. Neither ought a Physician to be thought unmerciful, because he tries all Remedies for the saving of his Patient. Pope *Innocent* XI. has strictly forbidden the Faithful to call any Priest a *Rigorist* or a *Jansenist*, for following the safer Opinion in the Administration of the Sacraments.

Q. What can a Confessor's intention be in deferring Absolution?

A. It cannot be any Prospect of worldly Interest.

Q. Why not?

A. Because most Penitents for Want of being better instructed, or else of a true Penitential Spirit, are offended at their Confessor for so doing. And there are but too many who would be glad to meet with such Directors, whom God condemns, and against whom he pronounces his Woes by the Prophet *Ezechiel*, *ch.* 13. *v.* 18.

Q. Against whom does God pronounce his *Woes*?

A. Against Pastors, *who promise Peace*

to

to Souls, that are not in a condition to find it; and who lay Pillows, as it were, *under the Heads of Sinners;* that is to ſay, who help them to live eaſy and without remorſe in their vicious Habits, by not reſtraining them with a prudent Severity.

Q. Upon what good Motive then, do theſe Confeſſors proceed, who delay, now and then, your Abſolution?

A. They are, doubtleſs, induc'd to take this Method, out of a Senſe of Duty and Charity to their own Souls, and to thoſe of their Penitents.

§ 2.

Q. How is it a Duty to their own Souls?

A. Foraſmuch as "it happens ma-"ny Times, that a Confeſſor, by giv-"ing Abſolution to habitual and relapſ-"ing Sinners, inſtead of releaſing their "Debts, contracts a new Debt himſelf, "for which he muſt one Day ſtand ac-"countable." *P. Girouſt S. J. tom. 2. pour le Careſme Serm. ſur le Peché d'Habitude, partie 1. pag.* 203.

Q. How does ſuch a Confeſſor contract a Debt upon his own Soul?

A. By acting contrary to the Orders of the Church, and the intention of Almighty God.

Q. Does the Church then order her Miniſters, on ſome occaſions, to defer Abſolution?

A. Yes. The Roman *Ritual*, and ſeveral other *Rituals*, as likewiſe S. *Charles Boromæus*, and S. *Francis Sales*, in their Inſtructions directed to the Confeſſors of their Dioceſes, oblige them ſo to do.

Q. What are thoſe *Rituals?*

A. They are Books of Direction, ſet forth by the Popes and Biſhops, for the due Adminiſtration of the Sacraments.

Q. Of what Authority are the *Inſtructions* of S. *Francis* and S. *Charles?*

A. Of great Authority with all good Catholics. The Spirit of S. *Francis* is well known from his admirable Book, entitled the *Introduction*, &c. As for S. *Charles*, the Church is in a great degree indebted to his Zeal, for the happy Concluſion of the Council of *Trent*, and for the *Catechiſm of Curates*, ſet forth by order of that Council.

Q. But is there a particular Difference due to S. *Charles's Paſtoral Inſtructions?*

A. Moſt certainly. *1ſt.* In regard of the Saint himſelf, whom God ſeems to have ſent for a freſh Model to all Catholic Paſtors. *2dly.* His aforeſaid *Inſtructions* have been publiſh'd, not only by order of a National Synod in *France*; but alſo, by order of the Vicar General

of

of Pope *Clement* XI. in the Year 1700.

Q. How is the Intention of Almighty God neglected, by not deferring Abſolution on due Occaſions?

A. Much in the ſame Manner as the *Guard* of a Royal Palace, would be thought to have neglected his Prince's Pleaſure, who ſhould ſuffer all indifferently to come into his Preſence: or a *Plenipotentiary*, who ſhould conclude a Peace contrary to his Inſtructions: or a *Treaſurer*, who ſhould throw away the King's Treaſure upon all that aſk it, without Diſtinction.

Q. How does the Confeſſor's Charity to his Penitent oblige him on ſome Occaſions to defer Abſolution?

A. 'Tis doubtleſs a Charity to make a Sinner ſenſible of his Danger, and of the Grievouſneſs of his Sins. The Phyſician is not blam'd for being ſlow in a Cure, that it may be the more complete and laſting.

Q. What are the Dangers into which Perſons caſt themſelves; who, notwithſtanding their vicious Habits are ſtill unbroken, and their Relapſes into Mortal Sins are as numerous as ever, extort Abſolution from their Confeſſor as often as they come to him?

A. The Dangers, as *P. Cheminais* obſerves, are theſe: 1*ſt*. They are apt to

cheriſh in themſelves a Spirit of Preſumption, and to harden their Hearts againſt all Fear of God's Judgments. *2dly.* To bring a Scandal upon Devotion, and the uſe of the Sacraments. *3dly.* They are in Danger of dying under the Guilt of final Impenitence, *tom.* 1. *Serm. ſur la Rechute, partie* 1.

Q. Is it then a Sin for Penitents to exact Abſolution ſhould be given them whenever they deſire it?

A. The third Council of *Toledo*, (*an.* 589. *can.* 11.) ſays they are guilty of an execrable Preſumption.

Q. What therefore muſt be the Effect of ſuch a haſty Abſolution?

A. It only ſerves, ſays *P. Cheminais*, to damn with the Penitents their uncharitable Confeſſors; who, out of a weak Compliance, beſtow it on them, and have not Courage to ſet before their Eyes the enormous Abuſe they commit againſt the Sacrament.

§ 3.

Q. What Perſons may reaſonably expect, purſuant to the Orders of God's Church and the Directions of his Saints, to have their Abſolution deferr'd?

A. 1*ſt.* They that know not the principal

principal Myſteries of Religion, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Hail *Mary*, the Commandments of God and of the Church, notwithſtanding they have been admoniſh'd of their Fault: what belongs to the Sacraments they have receiv'd, or are about to receive; or the principal Obligations of their State. Likewiſe Maſters and Miſtreſſes who take no Care for the Inſtruction of thoſe under their Charge, *Conc. Mediol. Quintum, S. Charles cap.* 12. *S. Tho.* 1, 2. *q.* 76. *art.* 2, *in c. 2dly.* They that are wanting in their Examination, or in the Integrity of their Confeſſions: that relate their moſt grievous Sins, with as little Signs of Contrition, as if they were telling an idle Story: that refuſe ſuch Penances as a prudent Director judges neceſſary; or that are accuſtom'd wilfully to neglect the Penance enjoin'd. *Ritual Rom. S. Bonav. in Confeſſionali, c.* 4. *3dly.* They that refuſe to be reconcil'd to their Enemies; to repair the Injury they have done to their Neighbour, in his Life, Goods, or Reputation; or to remove the Scandal they have given. *S. Mat.* 5. *v.* 24. *Conc. Conſtant.* 3. *can.* 100. *Conc. Mediol.* 1. *S. Aug. ep.* 54. *ad Macad., S. Tho.* 2, 2. *q.* 73. *ar.* 2. *in c. S. Fran. Xavier, in his Life, l.* 4. *p.* 366. *S. Fran. Sales, 4thly.* They that

that *will not* quit an immediate or near Occaſion of Mortal Sin; that is to ſay, ſuch Employments, Company, Books, Pictures, Dreſſes, &c. as will very probably draw them into frequent Sins, unleſs they quit them. Or they that *have not* quitted them, notwithſtanding they promis'd ſo to do, in their former Confeſſions. *Ritual Rom. & Catalaun. de Sacra. Pœn. S. Charles, ch.* 16, 17. *5thly.* They that have contracted a *Habit* of Sin, or *relaps'd* into Mortal Sins, frequently confeſs'd, with the ſame Eaſe and Frequency as they did before their former Confeſſions. *Ritual Rom. & Catalaun. Conc. Tolet. 3. can.* 11. *Greg.* VII. *l.* 7. *ep.* 10. *S. Fran. Xavier, in his Life, l.* 4. *p.* 365. *S. Charles, c.* 13, 15.

§ 4.

Q. Why may not *Habitual* Sinners have the Benefit of Abſolution, when they promiſe they will labour to break their vicious Habits?

A. For the ſame Reaſon, that an ill Servant, who is found to have had a long Cuſtom of Robbing his Maſter, is not immediately, upon his Promiſe of Amendment, to be truſted with the Keys of the Houſe. Beſides that evil Habits not being uſually reform'd on the ſud-

den,

den, the Converſion of ſuch Sinners is ſeldom wrought entirely in a few Days; or, however, cannot for ſome ſpace of Time be known to the Confeſſor.

Q. Did not our B. Saviour immediately abſolve S. *Mary Magdalen*, and the good Thief?

A. Yes: But he ſaw the Sincerity of their Hearts. And when a Confeſſor finds his Patient in *Magdalen*'s Diſpoſition, he may ſecurely abſolve him.

Q. Why may not a Perſon be immediately abſolv'd, tho' he has after frequent Confeſſions *relaps'd* with an equal Facility into Mortal Sins?

A. Becauſe it were a great Sin in a Confeſſor, to abſolve his Penitent, when he is not *morally certain*; or at leaſt, unleſs he have good and probable Reaſons to think that he is rightly diſpoſed for it. *Buſenbaum S. J. l.* 6. *tract.* 4. *cap.* 2. *dub.* 5. *n.* 3.

Q. Cannot a Confeſſor have this moral Certainty, or probable Perſuaſion, notwithſtanding the *eaſy* and *frequent Relapſes* of his Penitent?

A. No. For, as all agree, ſuch frequent *Relapſes* are a ſufficient Reaſon for a Confeſſor to *doubt* of the Validity of paſt Confeſſions. *P. Nepveu S. J. Reflec. Chret. tom.* 1. *Januar.* 13 *and* 16. *Cond. Chret. Part.* 1. *ch.* 11. *p.* 155.

155. *P. Girouſt. S. J. tom.* 2 *pour le Careſme Serm. ſur le Peché d'Habitude, partie.* 1. *P. Cheminais S. J. tom.* 1. *Serm. ſur la Rechute, partie.* 1. *Buſenbaum S. J. l.* 6. *tract.* 4. *cap.* 1. *dub.* 2. *n.* 9. *P. Houdry S. J. Biblioth. des Predicat. tom.* 8. *pag.* 3, 4, 18.

Q. Why ſo?

A. Becauſe they are a Sign that the Penitent had not in his former Confeſſions a Sorrow and Reſolution of Amendment, ſufficient to diſpoſe him for receiving the Grace of the Sacrament.

Q. How ſhew you them to be a Sign?

A. As it is reaſonable to think that a Perſon who never rightly recover'd, who ſoon relapſes into the ſame Diſeaſe; or that one of the World did not in earneſt fall out with a Neighbour, with whom he eaſily and ſpeedily makes Friends; ſo neither is it probable, that the Penitent, who eaſily and frequently repeats the Sins he confeſſed, was ever ſeriouſly reſolv'd to quit them. P. Nepveu, *ibid.*

Q. But how does the ſuſpected Invalidity of paſt Confeſſions exclude the Confeſſor's probable Perſuaſion of his Penitent's being rightly diſpos'd at Preſent?

A. As the Confeſſor has ſufficient Grounds from theſe Relapſes to *doubt* of the Validity of former Confeſſions; and

that

that his Penitent was not then diſpos'd for Abſolution; ſo he muſt needs have Reaſon to fear he is ſtill indiſpos'd for it, ſo long as he ſees no better Signs of a true Contrition, than he ſaw before. And therefore he is oblig'd to delay Abſolution, till he has ſurer Proofs of a true Converſion.

Q. What Proofs then muſt a Confeſſor expect to find before he can ſafely abſolve ſuch Penitents?

A. An Amendment of Life, which ſhews itſelf. *1ſt.* In the Care taken to apply fit Remedies. *2dly.* In a conſiderable Diminution of the Number and Grievouſneſs of their Sins.

Q. But if the Penitent aſſures his Confeſſor, that he is now at leaſt well prepar'd, and that he feels in his Soul a more ſincere Contrition than ever he did before, ought not the Confeſſor to believe him?

A. The Penitent is the Criminal on his Knees; and the Prieſt is not his Servant to give him what he calls for; but his Judge, who ſits to hear his Cauſe, and to give Sentence. And Nobody will eaſily take that Man's Word, who has often broken his Promiſes.

§ 5.

§ 5.

Q. Will not this Method of deferring Abſolution be apt to make Penitents deſpair?

A. No ſick Perſon can have reaſon to deſpair of Health; who, in order to recover it, has no more to do than to follow the Preſcriptions of a ſkilful Phyſician.

Q. May not a Sinner as well never go to Confeſſion, as return from it without Abſolution?

A. By no means. Confeſſion is ſtill profitable upon many Accounts, if Sinners be not wanting on their Parts.

Q. How?

A. 1*ſt*. It inclines them to Humility, 2*dly*. It procures for them good Advice and ſalutary Penances. 3*dly*. It enlivens their good Deſires, which may be follow'd by good Works. 4*thly*. It moves their Confeſſor to pray more earneſtly for them. And in fine, there's always ſome Grace obtain'd by ſubmitting to the Judgment of the Church.

Q. But what if one ſhou'd die before the next opportunity of going to Confeſſion?

A. 'Tis ſafer to die without Abſolution in the Practice of Penance, than after

after an abuſe of the Sacrament. Beſides, Sinners are no more mortal, while they are preparing for an effectual Abſolution, by a penitential Life, than they were all the Time they continu'd in their criminal Diſorders.

Q. May not a Penitent leave his Confeſſor, who now and then delays his Abſolution, and make choice of another; who, as he hopes, will never deny it!

A. No Confeſſor, indeed, can in Conſcience oblige me to confeſs always to himſelf. But ſhou'd I leave my uſual Director upon the Score of ſuch Delays, I might be in great Danger of finding a *blind Guide*, who wou'd caſt me headlong, with himſelf, into the Pit of eternal Perdition.

Q. But may not one go to another Confeſſor after the Misfortune of falling into ſome grievous Sin, which he cannot, without Shame, confeſs to his ordinary Confeſſor?

A. It would be very dangerous to do ſo; for it would nouriſh Pride and Impenitence, and incline the Sinner more eaſily to relapſe.

Q. Will it not be ſcandalous to ſee that one does not communicate, after having been at Confeſſion?

A. It ought not to be ſo. But, how-

ever, 'tis a much more dreadful Scandal to see Persons communicate, who reform not their vicious Lives.

Q. Why ought we not to be scandaliz'd at a Person's not communicating, who has been at Confession?

A. 1*st.* Because Absolution may sometimes, for the Penitent's greater Advantage, be deferr'd, when yet it might lawfully be given him. *Busenhaum S. J. l. 6. trac. 4. c. 2. dub. 5. n. 1.* 2*dly.* There are several good Reasons for Persons to abstain from Communion, tho' they have receiv'd Absolution.

Q. Can you tell me some of those Reasons?

A. Some, tho' they have been absolv'd, will abstain from Communion out of Humility; others, upon account of some Sin of their Life past, which comes fresh into their Memory, with an Apprehension that it has never been confessed: And not a few out of mere Scrupulosity. Some again, by reason of having accidentally broken their Fast, or been sick in the Night; and others in fine, for other Reasons.

Q. How is the Penitent to behave himself, when his Absolution is deferr'd?

A. He is to acknowledge himself unworthy to receive it; and, without murmuring

muring or importuning his Confeſſor, retire in a full Reſolution of uſing freſh Endeavours to obtain it by a Change of Life.

Q. And when Abſolution is given him, tho' perhaps after ſome Delays, how is he to receive it?

A. With a profound Humility, and a deep Senſe of Gratitude to Jeſus Chriſt; renewing, at the ſame Time, his Sorrow for all his Sins.

§ 6.

Q. Is it not a Conſequence from the aforeſaid Principles, that a Perſon, who, after ſeveral Confeſſions and Abſolutions relapſes frequently into Mortal Sins, is in great Danger of loſing his Soul?

A. The Conſequence, indeed, is very terrible, but yet it ſeems unqueſtionable; inſomuch that a learned Father of the Society does not ſtick to ſay, "Such as "paſs their Lives in riſing from, and "falling again into Mortal Sins, do com-"monly belong to the Number of the "Reprobate." *Recupitus Tract. de Numero Prædeſt. & Reprob. cap. 6. pag.* 44.

Q. What then muſt ſuch relapſing Sinners do, in order to prevent their eternal Miſery?

A. The best Method they can take is, to make a Retreat for some Days under a pious and prudent Director; that in the Bitterness of their Souls they may recall their past Years, and by a general Confession, repair the Defects of former ones.

Q. What mean you by a *general* Confession?

A. I mean a Confession of all the Sins which one has committed in his whole Life, or within some certain Space thereof.

Q. Where's the Advantage of such a Confession?

A. 1*st*. It is sometimes, nay many times, in regard of relapsing Sinners, necessary; by reason of the Invalidity and Insufficiency of past Confessions. 2*dly*. It helps to humble us and increase in our Hearts a Horror of Sin, and to raise a more steady Resolution of avoiding it, and of doing worthy Fruits of Penance. 3*dly*. It procures a great Peace of Conscience to all that are not really scrupulous.

LESSON

LESSON VII.

What is to be done after Confession.

§ 1.

Q. AS soon as you return from Confession, may you go immediately about your daily Employments?

A. By no means. For that were certainly an Affront to the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Jesus Christ, which by means of the Sacrament have been applied to my Soul.

Q. What then are you to do *after* Confession?

A. I am, *1st.* to thank God for the Passion of Jesus Christ, and the Application of his Merits to my Soul, by means of the Sacrament. *2dly.* To renew my *Detestation* of the Sins I confess'd, and my Resolution of using the necessary Means for avoiding them. *3dly.* Because I am not able to do any Thing of myself; I must offer up my Resolutions to Almighty God, and beg Grace to be steady in them. *4thly.* 'Tis proper to beg likewise a penitential Spirit, and to offer all the Crosses I may happen to meet with in the course of the Day, Week, or Month, united to

Christ's Sufferings in expiation of my Sins.

Q. Must you not likewise reflect on what your Confessor has said to you?

A. Yes. I must call to mind the Advice he gave me, to imprint it in my Memory, and foresee the Occasions of putting it in Practice.

Q. What if some Sin should occur to your Memory which you had forgotten in your Confession?

A. If it be a *Mortal Sin*, or that I doubt whether it be so or no, I must first make an Act of Contrition for it, and then go and confess it before I presume to communicate. But in Case it be only a *venial Sin*, it will suffice to be sorry for it, and to confess it to God alone.

Q. How is a Person to employ his Thoughts, whose Absolution has been deferr'd?

A. He must not fail upon returning from Confession: 1*st*. To acknowledge in the Sight of God, that he was unworthy of Absolution. 2*dly*. To thank God for having hitherto had Patience with him, and invited him to a sincere Conversion, by the Voice of his Minister. 3*dly*. To terrify himself with the Judgments of God on unrepenting Sinners. 4*thly*. To take a new Resolution

of

of doing his utmost for the reforming of his Life for the Time to come.

Q. Why must he not fail in these Particulars?

A. Because, if something of this Nature be not done, it is to be fear'd, he returns more harden'd from Confession, and will continue a Slave to Sin.

§ 2.

Q. May you tell a Companion what Penance was enjoin'd you?

A. By no means; lest I should give him an Occasion of rash Judgments or Temptations.

Q. May you speak of any Thing that passes in Confession betwixt your Confessor and yourself?

A. Should my Confessor chance to say any Thing unbecoming the Tribunal of Confession; I not only may, but am strictly oblig'd to give timely Notice of it to *his Superior*, that it may be remedied. *Greg. 15tus, in Bulla,* Universi anno 1622.

Q. May you tell his Fault to others not concern'd?

A. No. For that would be a Sin of Detraction. But I would advise my Friends to make choice of some more prudent Director.

Q. But

Q. But may you not ſpeak of the *good Advice* your Confeſſor gave you, or of the *Queſtions* he was forc'd to aſk you, in order to make your Confeſſion entire?

A. Such Relations do generally argue a Contempt of the Sacrament, and of God's Miniſter; and may be an occaſion of many Temptations and raſh Judgments: And to inquire after ſuch Matters, is the effect of a dangerous, if not a malicious Curioſity.

LESSON VIII.

Of Satisfaction.

§ 1.

Q. IS the Penance enjoin'd by your Confeſſor, to be perform'd, whether you have or have not been abſolv'd?

A. Yes. 'Tis in both Caſes a great Sin to neglect it wilfully. *Card. Lugo S. 7. Sect.* 10. *n.* 17.

Q. How is it to be perform'd?

A. With Humility and Repentance; and with a ſtrict regard to the Time and Method preſcrib'd by my Confeſſor.

Q. When is an Act of Repentance more peculiarly neceſſary for the due Performance of your Penance?

A. Should

A. Should I fall unhappily into Mortal Sin, before it is entirely perform'd, I muſt endeavour to repent before I go about it. *Suares & Layman S. J. apud Buſenbaum, Lib.* 6. *tract.* 4. *c.* 1. *dub.* 4. *art.* 1.

Q. Why ſo?

A. Becauſe no Action is *ſatisfactory* in him, who is under the Guilt of Mortal Sin.

Q. May you get another to perform your Penance in your ſtead?

A. Pope *Alexander* VII. has declar'd the contrary.

Q. When your Confeſſor enjoins you a Penance to be continu'd for ſome Days, in caſe you neglect or forget to perform it ſome of the ſtated Times, what Reparation muſt you make?

A. I muſt perform it as ſoon as I can.

Q. What if you ſhou'd entirely forget what it was your Confeſſor enjoin'd you?

A. I muſt preſently, if I can, have recourſe to my Confeſſor either to know it, or to take his Advice.

§ 2.

Q. Are you to content yourſelf with doing the Penance enjoin'd?

A. The Church ſuppoſes we ſhould do

do somewhat more. And therefore when the Priest imposes the Sacramental Penance; "He remits," says he, "the Rest to the Merits of Jesus Christ, "and to the Endeavours of the Penitent."

Q. Have Persons in the World any Opportunities of doing Penance?

A. A great many, were they but disposed to take Notice and make their Advantage of them.

Q. Can you shew me any?

A. They may perform a Penance very acceptable in the Sight of God: *1st.* By exchanging idle Visits into Visits to the Poor, the Imprison'd, or to Jesus Christ in the B. Eucharist. *2dly.* By keeping exactly to a prudent Regulation of the whole Day. *3dly.* By exercising Works of Mercy, corporal, or spiritual. *4thly.* By abridging themselves of some innocent Satisfaction, of some relishing Dish, or of useless Cloaths and Moveables. *5thly.* By a careful Discharge of all troublesome and painful Duties. *6thly.* By manual Labour, by cloathing the Poor, or adorning the Altar. *7thly.* By bearing patiently their own Infirmities, whether of Mind or Body. *8thly.* By submitting to all the Crosses which come from any Creature whatever.

Q. And

Q. And theſe, you ſay, will be ſatisfactory for paſt Sins?

A. Yes, if they be accompanied with a Spirit of Penance, and be offer'd to God in union with the Satisfaction of Jeſus Chriſt.

LESSON IX.

Remedies againſt Relapſes and Scruples.

§ 1.

Q. WHAT are the beſt Preſervatives againſt *Relapſes* for a Penitent, who reſolves, in earneſt, to amend his Life and ſave his Soul?

A. The Principal ſeem to be theſe: *1ſt.* Daily to renew the Reſolutions he made before and at Confeſſion. *2dly.* To beg of God daily, that he may rather die than offend his divine Goodneſs by any Mortal Sin. *3dly.* To be punctual in his Morning and Night Prayers. *4thly.* To let no Day paſs without reading ſome good Book, and making Reflections upon ſome Maxim of the Goſpel. *5thly.* To conſider himſelf frequently in the Preſence of Almighty God, and converſe with him by ſhort Acts of Adoration, Thankſgiving, Love, Confidence,

Confidence, Contrition, &c. and from time to time implore his Assistance; especially in Time of Temptation. 6*thly*. To avoid Idleness, worldly Conversation, profane Books, and all other occasions of Sin. 7*thly*. To have no Regard to what the World will say or think. 8*thly*. A great Diffidence in one's self, and a lively Confidence in the Goodness and Power of God, in the Promises and Merits of Jesus Christ. 9*thly*. A true and solid Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, Saint *Joseph*, his Angel Guardian, and the Saints of his Name and Profession.

§ 2.

Q. Scrupulosity being a Disease which does no small Mischief to the Penitent's Soul; can you prescribe any Remedies against it?

A. Spiritual Physicians do generally prescribe one or more of these: 1*st*. A sincere Humility, a great Love of God, and a firm Confidence in his Mercy. 2*dly*. Frequent Prayer. 3*dly*. Frequently to act against the Scruples. 4*thly*. To answer one's self instead of the Director. 5*thly*. Never to lose Time, nor molest one's self and him, with a Repetition of the same Difficulty. 6*thly*. To confess seldom,

ſeldom, and communicate as often as the Confeſſor ſhall think expedient.

LESSON X.

Of Annual Confeſſion.

Q. WHAT Obligation does the Church lay upon us as to Confeſſion?

A. To confeſs our Sins at leaſt once a Year.

Q. Why has ſhe laid this Obligation on us?

A. That we may not live in Sin, but may take care to convert ourſelves to God.

Q. Are Children under this Obligation?

A. All Children that are come to the Years of Diſcretion, and are capable of ſinning Mortally, are oblig'd to confeſs.

Q. When may a Child be thought to be at Years of Diſcretion?

A. When he can diſtinguiſh betwixt Good and Evil, will bluſh at a Lie, will condemn Obedience, diſcommend Diſobedience, and Diſreſpect to Parents, and the like.

Q. But what if Children have been ſo ill educated as to be capable of ſinning

ning Mortally, and be not yet disposed and prepar'd to go to Confession?

A. Parents, Pastors, and Superiors must take care to instruct and prepare them as soon as they possibly can.

Q. What Sin is it not to comply with this Command of the Church?

A. A mortal Sin. For, "He that "will not hear the Church, let him be "to thee as a Heathen or a Publican," says our Saviour. S. *Mat.* 18. *v.* 17.

Q. What Persons sin against this Precept?

A. They that pass Twelve whole Months, without making one *valid and good* Confession.

Q. But in case I have already been one whole Twelvemonth without making a good Confession, and therefore have committed a Mortal Sin, by my Disobedience to the Church, may I not defer it some Months longer, without incurring the Guilt of a new Sin?

A. No. Such a Person is under a strict Obligation of confessing with all speed.

Q. Should we not confess oftner than once a Year?

A. Most certainly we should.

Q. Why so?

A. Because 'tis clear from experience, that such as confess no oftner, live not as Christians

Christians ought to do; and for that Reason the Church exhorts us to frequent Confession.

Q. What Rule may be given as to the frequency of Confession?

A. There cannot be any General Rule for all Persons, save only this: That each one is in this Matter to follow the Advice of a *good Confessor*.

Q. May we not sometimes be oblig'd to confess, notwithstanding we have comply'd with the Church's Precept of Annual Confession?

A. Yes. For in all probable Dangers of Death, we are oblig'd to make a Confession, if a Confessor can be had.

Q. Who may be said to be in a probable Danger of Death, and therefore oblig'd to confess?

A. 1*st*. Persons that by reason of Sickness, seem to be drawing to their End. 2*dly*. Soldiers who are oblig'd to engage in a Siege or Battle. 3*dly*. Such as are going a dangerous Voyage. 4*thly*. Women who are near their Time of being deliver'd of their first Child; and also afterwards on the like Occasions, if they find themselves to be in Danger.

PART II.

Of Holy Communion.

LESSON I.

Of the Remote Diſpoſitions of Communion.

§ 1.

Q. WHAT Diſpoſitions does the Church require in one that is to communicate?

A. Two. The Firſt is, *Sacramental Confeſſion*, from all that are, or rationally apprehend they are, guilty of a Mortal Sin. The Second is, a *Natural Faſt*. S. *Aug. ep.* 118. *c.* 6.

Q. What mean you by a *Natural Faſt*?

A. A *Natural Faſt* is preſerv'd, ſo long as nothing, after Twelve of the Clock at Night, is receiv'd into the Stomach, in the Manner of Meat, Drink, or Phyſick.

Q. But in caſe one has good Reaſon to doubt whether this Natural Faſt has been broken or not?

A. Under ſuch a Doubt, it were a great

great Sin to receive the Holy Sacrament. *Conc. Tolet. 7. can. 1. anno* 646.

Q. What if it were but a very inconsiderable Quantity which one had taken?

A. The Case is the same: For the Intention of the Church on this Occasion, is not so much to command fasting, as to forbid the receiving of the B. Sacrament, after any Thing else has been receiv'd.

Q. May not a Person then wash his Mouth before Communion?

A. He not only may do it; but, methinks in reverence to the B. Sacrament, he ought to do it.

Q. But what if some Water should go down in washing one's Mouth?

A. If one wilfully swallow any, it prevents Communion. But if some Moisture only seem to fall unawares into the Stomach, 'tis suppos'd to go down in the Nature of Spittle, and therefore does not break the Natural Fast.

Q. Is there any exception from this Obligation of receiving the B. Sacrament fasting?

A. Yes. Sick Persons, when in danger of Death, ought to receive it as their *Viaticum*, though they have broken their Fast.

Q. But, put the Case; that after having receiv'd your *Viaticum*, you continue

tinue in a dying Condition for ſeveral Days, muſt you never receive again ſo long as you cannot faſt?

A. After eight or ten Days, if there ſtill be Apprehenſion of my Death, I may receive it again.

Q. What is to be ſaid of other Sick Perſons who are not in a Moral Danger of Death?

A. They are oblig'd to be faſting whenever they receive.

Q. But if they cannot faſt till Morning, and yet earneſtly deſire to communicate, may not the B. Sacrament be carried to them any Time after Midnight?

A. The Church ſeems not to approve of ſuch unſeaſonable Hours, ſave only when dying Perſons are to receive their *Viaticum*.

§ 2.

Q. What is farther requir'd that our Communion may not be unprofitable?

A. Holineſs of Life, a Spirit of Penance, the Practice of good Works, a Chriſtian Vigilance, a Diſengagement from the World and its Vanities; and, in ſhort, a Love of God, in conjunction with a real Deſire of ſerving him, are ſo far requiſite, that without them

we

we are never rightly disposed to profit by our Communion.

Q. Are we then to confine our Preparation to the very Day of Communion?

A. No. Our whole Lives should be a Preparation for this great Action; as they ought to be, for our appearing before Jesus, at the last Day. *Tit.* 2. *v.* 13. And we ought daily to desire it, as our B. Saviour desir'd to eat the *Passover* with his Disciples, S. *Luke*, 12. *v.* 30, &c. 22. *v.* 15. Or at least, it were proper to make it, in some degree, the Business of the foregoing Day.

Q. And what should that be?

A. 1*st*. To offer, in the Morning, all our Actions and Sufferings in Union with those of Jesus Christ, in order to obtain the divine Assistance towards the discharging of so great a Duty. 2*dly*. To keep a stricter Watch upon all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions. 3*dly*. To abstain from worldly Diversions, and from all distracting Business, as far as Duties will allow us. 4*thly*. To make frequent use through the whole course of the Day, of some Scriptural Ejaculations, which may express the Sense we have of Christ's Goodness to us in the B. Sacrament, of our Desire to approach, and withal of our Unworthiness.

Q. Can you point out some such Aspirations?

A. They

A. They may be ſuch as theſe:

1*ſt. Domine ſi tu es, jube me venire ad te.* "Lord! if it be you who have inſpir'd "me with the Deſign I have of commu-"nicating, give me the Diſpoſitions "requiſite to do it well."

2*dly. Quid eſt homo, quod memor es ejus; aut filius hominis quoniam viſitas eum?* "What is Man that you ſhould "think of him, and condeſcend to viſit "him." *Pſal.* 8. *v.* 5.

3*dly. Quemadmodum deſiderat Cervus ad fontes Aquarum, ita deſiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. Sitivit anima mea ad Deum fortem vivum, quando veniam & apparebo ante faciem Dei!* "As the "Stag longs for running Waters, ſo "does my Soul ardently deſire your "Preſence, O God! my Soul thirſts "after the Mighty and Living God: "When ſhall I come and appear be-"fore the Face of God." *Pſal.* 41. *v.* 1, 2.

4*thly. Qui elongant ſe a te, peribunt. Mihi autem adhærere Deo bonum eſt; & ponere in Domino Deo ſpem meam.* "They "who depart from you ſhall periſh. "But 'tis good for me to be united to "God, and to place my Hope in our "Lord God." *Pſalm* 72. *v.* 26.

5*thly. Dominus dabit benignitatem, & terra noſtra dabit fructum ſuum.* "Our "Lord

" Lord will pour down his Bleſſing, " and our Land will yield its Fruit." *Pſal.* 84. *v.* 13.

6*thly*, *Veni, Domine Jeſu.* " Come, " Lord Jeſus." *Apoc.* 22. *v.* 20.

7*thly*. *Domine non ſum dignus, ut intres ſub tectum meum; ſed tantum dic verbo, & ſanabitur anima mea.* " Lord! I am " not worthy, that you ſhould enter in- " to my Houſe; but only ſay the " Word, and my Soul will be heal'd." S. *Mat.* 8. *v.* 8.

Q. What is the beſt Employment for Afternoon?

A. 1*ſt*. A Chapter in the 4th Book of the *Following of Chriſt*, is very proper to be read. 2*dly*. 'Tis alſo adviſable where it can be done, to make a Viſit to J. Chriſt in the B. Sacrament, to beg he would prepare our Souls by his holy Grace, to be a fit Habitation for himſelf. 3*dly*. Upon going to reſt, to provide and peruſe ſome Meditation ſuitable to the Occaſion. 4*thly*. Earneſtly to recommend our Souls and Bodies to God, begging that his Holy Angels, our Guardians, may ſo watch over us, that nothing may be prejudicial to that Purity, which we ought to carry to the Holy Communion.

LESSON

LESSON II.

Of the near, or immediate Preparation.

§ 1.

Q. ON the Day of Communion, how will you begin to prepare yourself?

A. In the Morning, upon waking, I'll imagine my Good Angel says to me, *Ecce Sponsus venit, exite obviam illi.* "Behold, the Spouse is coming, go out "and meet him." Then rising without delay, after my Morning-Prayer, I'll apply myself to the Meditation I provided the Night before.

Q. Your Meditation being ended, how will you employ your Thoughts till the Hour of Communion?

A. I must keep myself in the greatest Recollection possible; setting aside all Affairs and Thoughts, which have not a Tendency to the great Action I am going about.

Q. When is it the most proper Time to receive?

A. In the Time of Mass; that is to say, immediately after the Priest has receiv'd the Chalice. But whenever want of Health, or some reasonable Occasion

caſion intervenes, which hinders one from ſtaying till Maſs is ſaid, the Church allows us to communicate any Hour before Noon.

§ 2.

Q. Are you not to *direct your Intention* when you are going to receive?

A. By all Means. For the want of a right Intention, would render my Communion fruitleſs, if not ſinful too.

Q. Why ſo?

A. Becauſe it is a Prophanation of the adorable Sacrament, to make it ſubſervient to any worldly Deſign.

Q. Is another Perſon's communicating a ſufficient Reaſon for you to do the ſame?

A. No more than that I ſhould take a Medicine becauſe another does.

Q. May you not deſire to be admitted, leſt People ſhould take Notice of you?

A. No. For that were a ſign I fear'd the Eyes of Men more than the Anger of Almighty God.

Q. Is it a ſufficient Reaſon for a Perſon's communicating once a Month, or once a Week, that he has been accuſtomed ſo to do.

A. To

A. To have no other Motive were certainly a great Irreverence.

Q. May you not do it upon account of your Parents or Superiors desiring it, or because your Confessor advises you to it?

A. The Desire of a Parent or a Superior, or the Advice of my Confessor may be a just Occasion of my preparing for Communion; but the Thing intended is, not the pleasing of any Creature whatsoever.

Q. What then ought to be your Intention in approaching to the Holy Sacrament?

A. My Intentions must be these:

1*st.* To glorify God, and to thank him by his Son Jesus Christ, 1 *Cor.* 10, 31. 2*dly.* To unite myself to Christ, and by so doing to receive the Accomplishment of his Promises, made to all those who worthily receive him, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *S. Jo.* 6. *v.* 55, 57, 58. 3*dly.* To announce the Death of Christ, 1 *Cor.* 11, *v.* 26.

Q. What is it to *announce the Death of Christ*, by communicating?

A. 'Tis to give Evidence of a lively Faith and a grateful Acknowledgement for the Mystery of our Redemption, which Jesus Christ completed by his Death and Passion.

Q. What

Q. What other Intentions are you to have?

A. 4*thly*. To ſtrengthen my Soul in Spiritual Life. 5*thly*. To gain an Increaſe of Charity and other Virtues. 1 *Cor.* 10. *v.* 17. *Zach.* 9. *v.* 17. 6*thly*. To receive the Pledge of my Reſurrection to eternal Life. S. *John* 6. *v.* 55.

Q. Will any one of theſe Intentions ſuffice?

A. Our B. Saviour having inſtituted the Holy Sacrament for *all* theſe Ends, we may do well to propoſe them all to ourſelves, as often as we communicate.

Q. Beſides theſe general Intentions, were it not proper to deſcend to others more particular?

A. Yes. We may very profitably make ſuch as theſe:

1*ſt*. To partake of the Spirit of the Myſtery, or to gain Grace to imitate the Saint, whoſe Feaſt it is. 2*dly*. To correct ſome Imperfection. 3*dly*. To obtain the Virtue of Patience and Reſignation under ſome Adverſity. 4*thly*. To underſtand the Will of God, as to a State of Life, or the like. 5*thly*. To thank Jeſus Chriſt for ſome particular Benefit.

Q. May you receive the B. Sacrament for *another's* Intention?

A. No more than be baptiz'd, con-

firm'd, or marry'd, or receive Abſolution, or Extreme Unction for another's Intention.

Q. Why not?

A. Becauſe the Sacraments were only inſtituted for the Benefit of the Church in general, and of thoſe Particulars, who ſhould worthily receive them.

Q. Is there no Advantage then to be reap'd from another's Communion?

A. There is, moſt certainly; upon account of the Communion of Saints, which we profeſs in our Creed; eſpecially if the devout Communicant prays for us. For we cannot doubt, but Jeſus Chriſt, as a liberal King, is inclin'd to hear the Petitions of ſuch, who worthily entertain him, both for themſelves and for their Neighbours.

§ 3.

Q. Your Intentions being made, what remains to be done, before you communicate?

A. I muſt endeavour to produce ſome Acts of Virtues ſuitable to the Occaſion.

Q. What Acts do you mean?

A. Such as theſe: 1*ſt.* Acts of Faith and Adoration. 2*dly.* Of Humility and Contrition. 3*dly.* Of Confidence and Deſire. 4*thly.* Of an ardent Love.

Q. How

Q. How will you exerciſe your *Faith?*

A. Upon theſe four Points: 1*ſt.* Who it is that comes to me. 2*dly.* To whom. 3*dly.* In what manner. 4*thly.* To what End he comes.

Q. What advantage will you reap from theſe four Conſiderations?

A. They will help me to produce the aforeſaid Acts.

Q. How will you pay your *Adoration?*

A. To the *Majeſty* of Jeſus Chriſt, veil'd under ſuch humble Appearances: To his *Immenſity*, contracted to ſo narrow a Compaſs: To his *Omnipotency*, working ſuch Wonders in the Bleſſed Sacrament: To his *Goodneſs*, which condeſcends to be the Food of my Soul.

Q. How will you raiſe in your Soul, Sentiments of *Humility* and *Contrition?*

A. By conſidering on the one Hand, the Majeſty, the Greatneſs, the Sanctity, the Goodneſs, and Benefits of Jeſus Chriſt; and on the other, my own Baſeneſs and Unworthineſs, on account of my Nature, my Sins, my Treachery and Ingratitude.

Q. How does this Holy Sacrament afford you Motives of *Confidence* and *Deſire?*

A. From theſe Conſiderations: 1*ſt.* Of the Wonders Chriſt performs, in or-

der to unite himſelf to my Soul. *2dly.* Of the merciful Promiſes he has made to all that worthily receive him. *3dly.* Of the preſſing Invitation which he gives us.

Q. What Conſideration muſt inflame your Love?

A. The great Inſtances our Saviour gives us, in this adorable Myſtery, of his Love to us.

§ 4.

Q. How muſt the Faithful approach to Communion?

A. With their Gloves off: Men without their Swords: Women with their Necks cover'd, and their Hood's over their Foreheads; but not too low.

Q. What is the Uſe of the Towel, which is laid ready for the Communicants?

A. They are not to wipe their Mouths with it, as ſome indecently are wont to do; but they are to hold it with their Forefinger and Thumb of each Hand, at ſome diſtance, their other Fingers being ſtretched out under it, that, in caſe any Particle chance to fall, it may be preſerv'd from coming to the Ground.

Q. In what Poſture are you to kneel?

A. As upright as I can, with my Eyes decently

decently caſt down, without either bending my Head downward, or holding it too high. And when the Prieſt comes to give me the Holy Sacrament; opening my Mouth ſufficiently, I muſt lay my Tongue over my under Teeth, that the Holy ſacrament may the more eaſily and ſafely be laid upon it.

Q. When the Prieſt adminiſtering the Communion, ſays, *Corpus Domini noſtri Jeſu Chriſti, &c.* what are you to do?

A. I muſt make an Act of Faith, by ſaying, *Amen*: That is to ſay, *'Tis true*, what the Prieſt preſents to me, is the true and real Body of Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. What is to be done after the Prieſt has given you the Bleſſed Sacrament?

A. Drawing back my Tongue, and cloſing my Lips, ſo ſoon as the ſacred Hoſt is ſomewhat moiſten'd, I receive it into my Stomach.

Q. And what then?

A. Retiring to my Place, and recollecting all my Senſes; I muſt reflect on the Divine Myſtery, and entertain my Saviour in the beſt manner I am able.

LESSON III.

Of Thankſgiving after Communion.

§ 1.

Q. BEING retir'd to your Place, how are you to employ your Thoughts and Affections?

A. It would be proper on this Occaſion to imitate ſome of thoſe Models which we find in Scripture, of Holy Perſons, who made their Addreſſes to Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. Can you produce ſome of theſe Models?

A. 1ſt. The Bleſſed Virgin *Mary* adoring her beloved Son, ſo ſoon as ſhe had brought him into the World, treaſuring up in her Heart, and meditating on all ſhe ſaw, or heard of him. *2dly.* S. *Mary Magdalen* at the Feet of Jeſus, hearing his Word, or pouring on his Head, as he ſat at Table, a precious Ointment, which perfum'd the Room. Or again, proſtrate at his Feet, after his Reſurrection, adore him with Sentiments of Admiration, Reſpect, and Love. *3dly.* With S. *Thomas*, when, having leave to touch the Side and Hands and Feet of Jeſus, I may break out into

to thoſe Pathetic Words, *Dominus meus, & Deus meus!* "My Lord, and my "God!"

Q. That you may in ſome Caſes imitate theſe Examples; what Method will you take?

A. I'll take care, 1*ſt.* To *adore* Jeſus Chriſt, as it were enthorn'd in my Heart. 2*dly.* To *admire* and *thank* his Goodneſs, for the Gift he has made me of himſelf. 3*dly.* To *offer* to him all the Faculties of my Soul, all the Senſes of my Body, all my Thoughts, Words, and Actions, as an Homage due to his Sovereign Majeſty. 4*thly.* To *inquire* after his Divine Pleaſure, ſaying, with S. *Paul* (*Acts* 9. *v.* 6.) *Domine, quid me vis facere?* "Lord, what will you "have me do?" And then in ſilence, hearken to his Inſpirations. 5*thly.* With a lively Confidence to *lay before him* all my Wants and Dangers. 6*thly.* To *renew my Sorrow* for paſt Sins, and my *Reſolutions* of living to him alone, for the Remainder of my Life, by avoiding the Occaſions of Sin, and practiſing ſuch Virtues as are moſt pleaſing to him, and moſt ſuitable to my State of Life. 7*thly.* To *lament* the Continuance of my Baniſhment on Earth, and expreſs my *Deſire* to be *diſſolv'd and be with Chriſt*, that I may ſee him Face to Face in his Throne

Throne of Glory, whom I have receiv'd veil'd with the humble and meek Appearances of the Sacrament. 8*thly*. To recommend to his Mercy my Relations, Friends, and Enemies; my King and Country, and the whole Church on Earth; as likewiſe the ſuffering Souls in Purgatory.

§ 2.

Q. How are you to ſpend the Day of your Communion?

A. It muſt be my Care not to imitate *Judas*, but to copy after the two Diſciples; who, after they had diſcovered Jeſus, by the breaking of Bread, made it the Buſineſs of the Day to reflect on the Favour they had received, and to give their Friends to underſtand that they had ſeen their Saviour.

Q. Who may be ſaid to imitate theſe two Diſciples?

A. They that ſpend the Day in Prayer and Works of Charity; in hearing, and meditating on, the Word of God; in recalling to Mind the Favour receiv'd, the good Sentiments they felt, the Reſolutions they took, and in edifying their Neighbour by their pious Diſcourſe, and virtuous Converſation.

Q. And

Q. And who may be ſaid to imitate *Judas?*

A. They who having given the Morning, or ſome Part of it to Jeſus Chriſt, make a Sacrifice of the Afternoon to the World and Sin, by frequenting Plays, Balls, or other Entertainments, either Criminal or Dangerous.

Q. Is our Gratitude to Jeſus, for having given himſelf to us in the Holy Sacrament, to end with the Day of Communion?

A. By no Means. So Divine a Favour ought to be for many Days, nay, for all our Life, a Subject of Acknowledgment. And it has been the Practice of ſome Saints, to dedicate all the Time between their Communions to Almighty God; partly in Thankſgiving for the laſt, and partly in preparing for the next.

LESSON IV.

Of frequent Communion.

§ 1.

Q. IS frequent Communion commendable?

A. In itſelf 'tis highly commendable, and

and much deſir'd by our Holy Mother the Church. *Conc. Trid. Seſſ.* 22, *ch.* 6. S. *Amb. lib.* 5. *de Sacram. n.* 25. S. *Aug. Serm.* 227.

Q. What Motives are there to induce the Faithful to frequent Communion?

A. 1*ſt.* The preſſing Invitations and great Promiſes of Jeſus Chriſt. S. *John* 6. 2*dly.* The Conſideration of our own Dangers, Wants, and Weakneſſes, which ſhould move us to ſeek Relief from him, who is our Refuge and our Strength.

Q. Is nothing more requir'd beſides theſe Motives?

A. Yes. The Church farther requires due Diſpoſitions on our Side.

Q. Does it become a Chriſtian to cenſure his Neighbour for going often or ſeldom to Communion?

A. No more than it would have become *Zaccheus* and the good Centurion, to have blam'd each other; when the one with Joy receiv'd our Bleſſed Saviour; the other judg'd himſelf unworthy of ſo great a Favour. S. *Luke* 19. *v.* 6. S. *Mat.* 8. *v.* 8.

Q. But what muſt thoſe beware of, who pretend to abſent themſelves, out of a Senſe of their own Unworthineſs?

A. That under a religious Appearance, they cloak not their Tepidity and Sloth; and, perhaps, ſome kind of Diſguſt

guſt and Contempt of the Bleſſed Sacrament. S. *Luke* 14. *v.* 24.

Q. When may it be hop'd that our Abſtaining from Communion proceeds from an humble and penitential Spirit?

A. When we labour, at the ſame Time, to reform our Lives, to ſubdue our vicious Inclinations; and by Prayer, ſpiritual Reading, Meditation, and the Practice of good Works, to fit ourſelves for the Meeting of our Spouſe. 1 *Cor.* 11. *v.* 28. *Acts* 9. *v.* 8, 9, 17, 19. S. *Mat.* 25. *v.* 7.

Q. And what muſt be their Care who frequently communicate?

A. That they never preſume to do it, without requiſite Diſpoſitions.

Q. Are greater and perfecter Diſpoſitions requir'd of thoſe that approach *once a Week*, than of others that come not to the Sacraments above once a Month?

A. Moſt certainly. The ſpotleſs Lamb admits thoſe only to be his conſtant Attendants, and to follow him whereſoever he goes, who are pure and without Stain, and in whoſe Mouths no Lie is found. *Apoc.* 14. *v.* 4, 5.

§ 2.

Q. What Perſons may communicate *once a Month?*

A. They

A. They that *are not* under the Habit of any Mortal Sin; but on the contrary *labour* to avoid it, or who having renounc'd a vicious Habit, which they had contracted, *uſe their beſt Endeavours* to get rid of it. *P. Nepveu S. J. Cond. Chret. ch.* 12. *p.* 237.

Q. What may be inferr'd from hence?

A. That Perſons who lead a vicious courſe of Life, if they chance to meet with an eaſy Confeſſor, who admits them without delay to the Benefit of Abſolution, as often as they confeſs, yet ought not immediately to approach to Communion, ſince they have not, as 'tis ſuppos'd, *uſed their beſt Endeavours to rid themſelves of their ſinful Habits.*

Q. Should not Chriſtians endeavour to receive *once a Month?*

A. None that have any Zeal for their Salvation, will fail to do it with their Confeſſor's Advice. S. *Fran. Sales, Introd. Part.* 2. *ch.* 20.

Q. Who may be allow'd to communicate *once a Week?*

A. They that live in the State of Grace, without falling into Mortal Sin; who have no Affection or ſinful Inclination, even to venial Sin, and alſo feel in their Souls a great Deſire to communicate. S. *Francis Sales, ibid.*

Q. Are

Q. Are there many Chriſtians ſo happily diſpos'd?

A. 'Tis to be hoped there are: But yet 'tis much to be feared, that a great many flatter themſelves they are of this virtuous Number, when effectually they are not.

Q. What Perſons have Reaſon to fear that they flatter themſelves in this Point?

A. They who eaſily perſuade themſelves that it is only out of Frailty or Ignorance, or by ſurpriſe, that they fall into certain venial Sins, as of lying, boaſting of themſelves, cenſuring their Neighbour, peeviſhneſs, &c. when in reality they take no Pains to correct themſelves of theſe vicious Habits.

Q. When may we hope we are free from *venial Affections?*

A. When a true Chriſtian Vigilance, and a Care to avoid the Occaſions of ſuch Failings, appear in the whole Conduct of our Lives.

Q. What is to be ſaid of thoſe who being accuſtom'd to receive once a Week, or oftner, take it ill of their Confeſſor, if he now and then abridges them of that Favour?

A. Such Penitents give their Confeſſors juſt Reaſon to fear, that they are not at all qualify'd for ſo great a Favour;

when, notwithſtanding their frequent Acceſs, they are ſuch ſmall Proficients in that fundamental Leſſon of Jeſus Chriſt, "Learn of me to be meek and "humble of Heart." S. *Mat.* 11. *v.* 29.

Q. What Perſons may communicate more than once a Week?

A. They that ſeldom commit a deliberate venial Sin; that labour in good earneſt to attain to Perfection; that make it their Buſineſs to ſubdue their Paſſions; that endeavour to acquire the Virtues ſuitable to their State, and with great Care and Devotion prepare themſelves for receiving the Holy Sacrament. *P. Nepveu, Cond. p.* 239.

LESSON V.

Of Paſchal Communion.

Q. WHAT does the Church command as to the receiving of the Bleſſed Sacrament?

A. To receive it once a Year; and that at *Eaſter*, that is to ſay, on ſome of the fifteen Days, between *Palm-Sunday* and *Low-Sunday*, incluſively.

Q. When are Children oblig'd to communicate?

A. So

A. So ſoon as their Paſtors judge them to have ſufficient Diſcretion, and that they are ſo well inſtructed as to be capable of profiting by it.

Q. Is this Duty of *Eaſter* diſcharg'd by a ſacrilegious Communion?

A. By no means. On the contrary, one incurs the Guilt of a double Sin, by violating both the Law of Chriſt and the Law of the Church. *Innocent* XI.

Q. What if a Perſon ſhould foreſee, that in all probability, by reaſon of ſome neceſſary Voyage or Journey, he ſhall not have an Opportunity of communicating within theſe fifteen Days?

A. In ſuch a Caſe, he is oblig'd to communicate before his Voyage or Journey, in order to comply with his Paſchal Duty.

Q. What if one ſhould not diſcharge this Duty, neither at *Eaſter* nor before it?

A. He muſt communicate as ſoon as he can afterwards.

Q. Are all, who deſire to comply with their *Eaſter* Duty, immediately to be admitted?

A. No. The Church orders Confeſſors to defer the Paſchal-Communion of ſuch as are not in their Judgment ſufficiently diſpos'd. *Conc. Later.* 2. *can.* 21.

Q. Why has not the Church determin'd theſe fifteen Days for the Annual Confeſſion, as well as for the Annual Communion?

A. Becauſe ſhe knows that a great many Chriſtians ſtand in need of a longer Preparation for their *Eaſter Communion*. And for that Reaſon, they may confeſs at the beginning of *Lent*, or as ſoon as they pleaſe, in order to fit themſelves for the diſcharging of their *Eaſter Duty*.

Q. With what Puniſhment does the Church threaten thoſe that are wanting to this Obligation?

A. To exclude them from the Houſe of Prayer during Life; and, when they die, to deny them Chriſtian Burial.

Q. Is it adviſable to communicate more than once within the Term of the fifteen Days?

A. As for Perſons who make their Salvation the earneſt Buſineſs of their Life, they may do well to celebrate apart by different Communions. 1*ſt*. The Inſtitution of the Holy Sacrament. 2*dly*. The Paſſion of our Saviour. 3*dly*. The Reſurrection.

Q. What Advice do you give them who have formerly made their firſt Communion at *Eaſter*?

A. To

A. To ſanctify the Anniverſary Day of that great Action by a more than ordinary Devotion, and by communicating, if they can: renewing, with all the Vigour of their Souls, their firſt Fervour; repairing all paſt Defects; and pouring forth their Hearts in Acts of Gratitude.

PART III.

Containing PRAYERS before and after Confeſſion and Communion; with an Examination of Conſcience.

A PRAYER to beg of God the Grace to know and deteſt our Sins.

O My God, have Mercy on me a Sinner. I have ſinned; and if I ſhould ſay, that I have not ſinn'd, I ſhould be a Liar, and there would be no Truth in me. Thy Eyes, which are always fix'd upon me, ſee whatever is criminal or imperfect in me. There is no hiding my Sins from Thee. But where is the Man that is able of himſelf to know his Sins? Make me, O God, to know mine: Help me to a full Diſcovery of their Number and Enormity, and of all that ſhould be known in Relation to them, that I may hate them with all my Soul, and confeſs them with all Sincerity. But whilſt thou giveſt me a Knowledge of them, inſpire me, at the ſame Time, with a Hatred and Deteſtation

teſtation of them, and a firm Reſolution of avoiding them for the future. Give me the Spirit of Repentance; and having cruſh'd and bruis'd my ſtony Heart, make it pour forth Tears of Contrition, as formerly in the Deſart thou didſt ſtrike the Rock, and change it into a Source of living Waters. And that my Tears of Contrition may become a healing Bath to the reſtoring of my ſpiritual Life and Strength, mingle them with the Tears and Blood which Jeſus Chriſt, thy Son, ſhed for my ſake; and in Conſideration of them, kindle in my Heart the Fire of thy Love, that an ardent Love of thee may gain me Pardon of my many Sins.

A Prayer after the Examination.

THOU haſt given me, O my God, a Knowledge of my Sins. I thank thee for ſetting before my Eyes, by the Light of thy holy Law, the Spots and Blemiſhes of my Soul. Glory and Juſtice and Mercy belong to thee; and to me, nothing but Confuſion, Shame, and Puniſhment, becauſe I have ſinn'd, and offended thee; and bid defiance to thy Commands. But what will it avail me to have diſcover'd my Iniquities, unleſs I relinquiſh them? And how can this be done, without a freſh Supply of thy

thy powerful Grace? Grant me it, O my God! and perfect in me the Work thou haſt begun. With thy Aſſiſtance I will riſe from Sin, and in a deep Senſe of my Miſery, and of thy Goodneſs, return to thee. I will remember thou art my Father, and conſidering thee in the Perſon of thy Miniſter, I will caſt myſelf at his Feet, and ſay to thee, "Father, I have ſinn'd againſt Heaven, and even in thy Sight: I am now unworthy to be call'd thy Son; treat me as one of thy Servants." Forgive me theſe Sins of which my Conſcience now accuſes me. Forgive me thoſe of which I am ignorant. Forgive me for thy Mercy's ſake, through the Merits of thy Son, Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

Prayers before Confeſſion.

An Act of Faith.

IN coming to thee, my God! I ſtedfaſtly believe that thou art the Sovereign and Independant Being; that thou rewardeſt thoſe who ſeek thee; and that, as thou never denieſt thy Bleſſings to thoſe that live in Innocence, ſo neither doſt thou reject the humble and contrite Heart of a Sinner who returns to thee; but, on the contrary, doſt ſhew him Mercy. Whatſoever thou haſt reveal'd is true; and whatſoever

whatſoever thou haſt promis'd, is ſecure. Thou haſt reveal'd, that it is thy Grace, which juſtifies the Sinner, and that having loſt himſelf by plunging wilfully into Sin, he cannot riſe, nor be converted by himſelf; but is converted and ſanctify'd by thy Grace; procur'd for him by the Redemption of JeſusChriſt thy Son: This I believe, O Lord! and with Tears I entreat thee to add more Life and Vigour to this Faith, which thou haſt given me. Thou haſt promis'd Mercy to the Sinner that aſks it of thee; withal aſſuring him, that it is not the Death, but the Converſion of Sinners which thou deſireſt. Thou haſt engag'd thy Word that thou wilt blot out and forget his Sins, the very Day he returns to thee. I firmly believe thy Promiſes, and conjure thee to grant me a ſhare in them, now that I come to thee and implore thy Mercy.

An Act of Fear.

I Am thoroughly ſenſible, O my God! how unworthy I am to obtain the Mercy which I aſk. I tremble in putting up my Petition for it; for thou art juſt, and thy Juſtice will not ſuffer Sin to go unpuniſhed. O juſt Judge! O terrible and all-powerful God! O God

of

of Vengeance! thou didſt not ſpare thy Angels; and thou threateneſt ſinful Man with the ſame eternal Fire, which was kindled firſt for the Devils, and is ſtill blown up by the Breath of thy implacable Indignation! It chills my Blood to contemplate thy rigorous Judgments: I ſhrink at the Thought of that amazing Sentence thou wilt pronounce againſt thy Enemies, and of that Eternity of ſcorching Flames which will be the Portion of the Wicked! Increaſe this Fear in my Heart, and render it beneficial by the Impreſſion of thy Holy Spirit. May it excite in me, when I accuſe myſelf in the Tribunal of Confeſſion, that Sincerity and Sorrow, which will be uſeleſs to the Sinner at the Day of general Judgment, when thou wilt declare him guilty from the Tribunal of thy Juſtice. And having thus diſpos'd me for the Reception of thy Grace, may it with-hold me from all that diſpleaſes THEE; who, after having kill'd the Body, "can caſt both Body and Soul "down into Hell."

An Act of Confidence.

BUT yet, O my Lord and my God! I hope in thee; and the Confidence I have in thy Goodneſs, ſupports me under that weight of Fear, which the Conſideration

Conſideration of thy Juſtice brings upon me. Thy Goodneſs is nothing inferior to thy Juſtice; and it is a Pleaſure to thee to ſhew Mercy during *this Life*, which is *thy Time of Mercy*. It is not with any Confidence in my own good Works or Merits, that, proſtrate in thy Sight, I addreſs my Prayers to thee, but merely in regard of the Multitude of thy Mercies. I hope thou wilt take Pity on me, in proportion to thy boundleſs Mercy, and for the Glory of thy Holy Name, pardon me my Sins, which are exceeding numerous. I hope, that as thou didſt not ſpare thy only Son, but gaveſt him up a Ranſom for my Sins, thou wilt forgive them upon his Account. He is my *Advocate:* He is the *Victim* of Propitiation for my Offences: He lov'd me to that Degree, as to deliver himſelf up to Death for my ſake. Therefore, with a ſolid Confidence, I expect of thy Mercy, the Remiſſion of my Sins, which he aſks for me; and that Grace, which he merited and bought for me at the Price of his Sacred Blood.

An Act of the Love of God.

O Thou Fountain of all Juſtice, and Author of all Holineſs, my Lord and my God! Thou art HOLINESS ITSELF! I begin to love thee, and deſire to be repleniſh'd with thy Love. It was ſin that I lov'd not thee. In ſinning I turn'd myſelf away, and ran a great Diſtance from thee. How then can I relinquiſh Sin, but by turning towards thee, and coming home to thee by Love? I love thy Holineſs and Juſtice, which have laid open to my Sight the Lothſomneſs and Injuſtice of my Sins. I love thy Mercy, from which I expect Pardon. I love thee, my God! who haſt created me for thyſelf; redeem'd me by thy Son Jeſus Chriſt; preſerv'd my Life whilſt I was miſpending it in offending thee, and without being wearied by my Delays and ungrateful Returns, after ſo many Calls and Tenders of thy Grace and Favour, haſt given me at preſent a Good Will to return to thee. Thou art ready to reſtore me to the Number of thy Servants, and upon a Grant of Pardon for paſt Sins, art graciouſly inclin'd to give me a Crown of Juſtice, and to be thyſelf my Reward and Happineſs to all Eternity.

A De-

A Deteſtation of Sin.

I Love thee, O my God! and hate and deteſt the Sins, whereby I have offended thee. I am ſenſible, and acknowledge, what a Miſery it is to have abandon'd thee. I was doubly criminal in having forſaken thee, the Source of living Waters, and Fountain of true Felicity, and in preference, to have made choice of a counterfeit Pleaſure, a ſtream of muddy Water, which has poiſon'd me to Death. I do here, in thy Sight, arraign, accuſe, and condemn myſelf. I am aſham'd to have ſo grievouſly offended thee. I ſigh for my innumerable Sins, and beg thou wouldſt forgive them through the Merits of thy Son Chriſt Jeſus. And whereſoever my Repentance is defective, vouchſafe to make it up, from that Ocean of Contrition, with which he hated and deteſted the Sins of all the World. *Amen.*

A Reſolution of Amendment.

ONCE again I renounce Satan and his Works, and Pomps. I renounce all Sin. I deſire, O my God! to receive thy Grace in the Sacrament thou haſt appointed for the Remiſſion of our Sins. I deſign, by thy Holy Grace, to begin a new Life, and to ſpend the remainder

of my Days in a due Obedience to thy Commands. I am willing to ſuffer, and to make the beſt Atonement I am able for my Sins. I will bear thy Anger, becauſe I have ſinn'd againſt thee. I deſign to produce worthy Fruits of Repentance; and offering thee all that Jeſus Chriſt thy Son ſuffer'd for the Expiation of my Sins, I accept of all ſuch Troubles and Afflictions, as it ſhall pleaſe thee to make uſe of, in order to bring me to a Participation of his Sufferings, and apply to my Soul the Merits of his Death.

Another Act of Contrition.

THOU haſt created me, O my God! for no other End, but to love thee, to ſerve thee, and to ſave my Soul; and I hitherto have liv'd, as if my only Buſineſs in this World were to offend thee, and loſe it: For had I been born for ſo unhappy a Deſign, could I have taken any other Method to accompliſh it, than what I have hitherto purſu'd? Thou haſt done all that was neceſſary on thy Part to oblige me to love and ſerve thee: Thou haſt furniſh'd me with all the Means conducive to that End: Thou haſt conſtrained me by thy innumerable Benefits, and ſolicited me by thy Heavenly Graces: But, alas! I have neglected

neglected all those Means, and have made no return for thy Benefits and Graces, but those of daily Ingratitude and Infidelities. Nay, many times I have made thy very Benefits the Matter of my Crimes. Thy Patience in bearing with my Disorders, and thy Readiness in pardoning them, have serv'd me for a Motive to offend thee with the greater Obstinacy. I imagin'd I might safely persist in my Iniquity, because I was persuaded thou wast always ready to shew me Mercy, and receive me, whensoever I should come to present myself to thee. What shall I most admire? the Excess of thy Patience and Goodness; or that of my Malice and Insolence? The one seems no less incomprehensible than the other; but the Consideration both of the one and of the other ought equally to cover me with Confusion, and penetrate my Heart with the deepest Sorrow.

And yet, O Lord! thou hast not cast me off, notwithstanding thou hast so much Reason to do so: Thou hast borne with me, notwithstanding my Insolence in offending thee: Thou hast waited for me, notwithstanding my Obstinacy in resisting thee: Even when I thought of nothing else but affronting thee, thou hadst Thoughts of Tenderness towards

me, and of preventing me with thy Grace: When I endeavoured to run from thee, thou hadſt the Goodneſs to draw near to me, and to conſtrain me to return. Having withdrawn myſelf from under the Conduct of thy fatherly Bounty, I could expect nothing elſe but to feel the Effects of thy Indignation and Revenge. The Number and Grievouſneſs of my Crimes; ſo many Indignities offer'd to thy Majeſty; ſo many Creatures abus'd to thy Diſhonour, ſeem'd all to call for Juſtice from thee, and to arm thy Hand againſt me. Thou haſt puniſh'd many others leſs criminal than myſelf, and I have not been deterr'd by their Example. This was a ſufficient Reaſon for to have treated me with greater Severity than thou haſt treated them; yet thy *Mercy* has been *invincible;* for notwithſtanding ſo many Reaſons pleaded ſtrongly againſt me, yet thou haſt with-held the Strokes of thy Juſtice. Whilſt thou haſt ſuffer'd ſo many others to fall into Hell, thou haſt withdrawn me from its Precipice, and hinder'd me from throwing myſelf headlong into it.

By what means, O Lord! was it poſſible for me to have deſerv'd this ſaving Love, this indulgent Treatment at thy Hands? Or rather, what have I not done to make myſelf unworthy of ſo

ſingular

ſingular a Grace? This ſhould cauſe me to proclaim and admire the Extent of thy Mercies to all Eternity!

But, how could I poſſibly hold out againſt ſo many Motives, which engag'd me to be faithful in thy Service? what Profit or Pleaſure have I found ſo extraordinary in Sin, to give it, as I have done, the Preference in my Heart, to thy Grace and Friendſhip? Alas! It muſt be own'd, and this forc'd Confeſſion makes me the more ſenſible of my Ingratitude, it was only for the ſhameful Pleaſure of a Moment, that I offended thee; for a vile Intereſt, which ought not to have cauſed a Breach with the meaneſt of my Friends. But had it been for the gaining the whole World, I ſhould ſtill be guilty of inexcuſable Folly, in preferring thy Creatures to thee; which, whatever degree of Excellence may appear in them, are a mere Nothing in thy Sight.

I am ſtruck with Horror when I think of the Blindneſs of the *Jews*, who preferr'd a profligate wicked Wretch, the infamous *Barrabbas*, before thee, my God and Saviour! Alas! They were blind Men: They knew thee not. But as for me, although I know thee, and believe thee to be my God and my Saviour; yet, what is there that I have

not preferr'd before thee? Have I not deſpiſed and undervalu'd thee to the laſt Degree? Have I not, a thouſand Times, trampled under Foot that precious Blood, which thou ſheddeſt for me; and renew'd, as it were, that cruel Death, which thou ſuffer'dſt for love of me? If thou hadſt requir'd of me, in acknowledgment of thy Favours, to ſacrifice my Life, and ſpill my Blood to the laſt Drop, would it have been more than thy Love oblig'd me to? But thou didſt not exact ſo much; thou deſir'dſt no more than that, for a Mark of my Obedience and Fidelity, I ſhould reſiſt a criminal Deſire, avoid a dangerous and ſinful Occaſion, uſe ſome Endeavours to curb an unruly Paſſion: This was very little; and yet this little, which would have contented thee, thou couldſt not obtain of me.

But now, O my God! thou ſhalt obtain it; or rather, let me obtain it of thee; for a change of Heart muſt be thy Work. I could eaſily, of myſelf, ſeparate from thee; but without the Help of thy Grace, I cannot return to thee, nor have a ſincere Regret for my Separation from thee.

I therefore beg of thee, O Lord! this perfect Return. I beg of thee this ſincere Regret. It is by that ſame Mercy, which

which I have ſo frequently abus'd, by the ſame precious Blood, which I have ſo frequently prophan'd, but which is ſtill the Price of my Redemption, that I beg both the one and the other. And, becauſe there is nothing which I may not hope to receive, in Conſideration of this ſacred Pledge of thy Heavenly Love, I beg again the Aſſiſtance of thy Grace, to be ſtrengthen'd in the Reſolution, thou haſt now inſpir'd into me, rather to die, than to offend thee for the Time to come.

An Act of Contrition for Venial Failings.

I Am perpetually offending thee, O Lord! always purpoſing to avoid the ſmalleſt Faults which may diſpleaſe thee, and yet continually relapſing into them! Conſidering this Viciſſitude of my Confeſſions and Commiſſions; of my Reſolutions to avoid, and of my relapſing into the ſame Sins, ought not I to be aſham'd of my Inconſtancy, and admire thy Patience? I ſtand in need of a Patience *infinite* like thine, not to be wearied with ſuch frequent Relapſes; and it muſt be an Ingratitude, baſe as mine, ſo continually to abuſe thy Graces and Bounties. 'Tis true, I have reaſon to hope, that thy mercy has preſerv'd me from

from falling into thoſe enormous Sins, which muſt be an object of Abhorrence to a Soul that has any Senſe of Religion. But ſhall I make no Account of the Multitude of venial Sins which I commit daily, and which only appear little, becauſe of my little Faith and Love for thee; and that I frame but a weak and imperfect Idea of thy Greatneſs and Sanctity, and of that infinite Oppoſition thou haſt to Sin, of what Nature foever it be. An Oppoſition ſo eſſential to thee, that thou canſt no more ceaſe from hating Sin, than from being my God.

Ah! my Lord, the Severity with which thou haſt puniſh'd ſmall Faults in the faithfulleſt of thy Servants, in *Moſes*, *David*, and ſeveral others, and daily puniſheſt the like in the Souls, which thy Juſtice obliges to paſs through the Fire of Purgatory, Souls ſo ſincerely loving thee, and ſo tenderly lov'd by thee, gives us ſufficiently to underſtand thy Hatred of Venial Sin. Can I then love an Evil, which thou ſo violently hateſt? And, if I lov'd it not, could I commit it ſo frequently and ſo eaſily as I do? Is it poſſible, O my God! that I ſhould make that the Subject of my Diverſion, which is the Object of thy Hatred and Revenge? Is it poſſible I ſhould be willing to diſpleaſe thee by committing

committing Sin so easily, or to content myself to please vile Creatures?

A Soul, that knows God, and knows by Consequence what an Evil it is to displease him, can hardly comprehend how 'tis possible to reconcile these two contrary Terms, *to love God*, and *to displease him voluntarily*. And yet this same Contradiction have I too often made appear in my Behaviour, if there be any Truth, my God! in that Protestation I so often make of loving thee. For, how many Times have I had the Misfortune, and is it not the Case with me every Day, to fall into the same Sins, by which I know thou art offended? And what ought the more to increase my Confusion, is, that the Consideration of thy Displeasure seems to make little or no Impression on me.

'Tis only a venial Sin (have I many times said to myself, to embolden me to commit it the more easily, or at least my Actions and Behaviour have said as much) but have I ever well consider'd the Import of these Words, *'Tis only a venial Sin?* that is to say, 'tis a Fault much less indeed than a mortal Sin; but yet a Fault which ought not to have been committed upon any Account whatsoever. 'Tis so great an Evil, that the greatest

greateſt Evils of the World—the Death of all Mankind—or the Deſtruction of the Univerſe—is not to be compar'd to it: For what are the greateſt Evils which can happen to a Creature, in compariſon to the Evil done to the Creator, by Sin? And yet this is the Evil of which I make ſo ſmall Account, and which I daily commit, almoſt without Reflection, and even for an idle Recreation. Great God! what a Recreation for one, who, *enlightened by Faith*, ought to have a more lively Apprehenſion of the Truths of thy holy Religion!

Deliver me, O Lord! from ſo dangerous a Miſtake, ſo pernicious a Blindneſs. Make me conſider Sin no longer in the falſe Glimmerings of a blind Paſſion, but in the Light of thy eternal Wiſdom. Inſpire into my Heart a Portion of that ſacred Averſion, which thou haſt for the ſmalleſt Sins. Make me fear and ſhun them more than the greateſt Evils of this World. Make me firmly reſolve to ſuffer any thing, rather than deliberately to commit any one venial Sin. *Amen.*

A Prayer

A Prayer to be ſaid immediately before Confeſſion.

BE thou, O Lord! in my Mouth and Heart, that I may make a ſincere and entire Confeſſion of all my Sins: And alſo in the Heart and Mouth of thy Miniſter to whom I addreſs myſelf; that, repleniſh'd with thy holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, of Wiſdom, and of Charity, he may perfectly underſtand the State of my Conſcience, may teach me what I am to do for my Amendment, and apply to my Soul the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, thy Son, for the waſhing away my Sins, healing my Wounds, and rendering me victorious over all the Attacks of the Enemy of my Salvation. *Amen.*

Prayers after Confession.

A Thankſgiving.

O My Soul, bleſs the Lord! who has pardon'd thee all thy Sins, cured thy Infirmities, redeem'd thee from the Jaws of Death, and encompaſs'd thee with his Mercies and Graces. O my God! thou art merciful and full of Sweetneſs; patient and full of Clemency. Thou haſt not treated me as my Sins deſerv'd, nor puniſh'd me in Proportion to the

the Enormity of my Offences. But in Quality of a Father, that has tender Compaſſion for his Children, thou haſt taken Pity on me, and haſt caſt all my Iniquities behind thee. I have confeſs'd my Injuſtice to thee, and thou haſt pardon'd me. Be thou bleſſed for evermore: And keeping on the Courſe of thy Mercies to me, vouchſafe to accept the humble Acknowledgment which I pay thee, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, thy Son, by whom thou haſt given me Victory over the Enemies of my Salvation, and that earneſt Deſire I now conceive of praiſing and proclaiming thy great Mercies to all Eternity.

O Jeſus! who haſt lov'd me, and in thy Blood haſt waſh'd me from my Sins, 'tis by thee that I have acceſs to God, thy Father: 'tis by thee that I have obtain'd the Pardon of my Sins. I fall at thy ſacred Feet, with an humble Tender of my Thanks, as formerly the Leper did, for having cleans'd and cur'd me from the Leproſy of Sin. After the Example of the *believing Thomas*, I adore thee, "as my Lord and God!" And, as repenting *Peter* afflicted for his Sin, I proteſt, in thy holy Preſence, that I entirely love thee, and hope I may take thyſelf, who ſeeſt the bottom of my Heart, for a Witneſs of the Sincerity of

of my Repentance, my Gratitude, and my Love.

Another Act of Contrition.

THE more Grace I have receiv'd of thee, my God, the more ſenſible ought I to be of the Enormity of my Sins, and the deeper my Grief for having committed them. I have ſtill an Apprehenſion for the Sins thou haſt pardon'd me: I have them always before my Eyes: and while I earneſtly beſeech thee ſtill more and more to waſh and cleanſe me from my Iniquities, I feel within my Soul an Increaſe of that Hatred and Averſion thou haſt given me of them. The Pardon thou haſt juſt now granted me, increaſes and inflames the Love I owe thee and my Sorrow, for having offended ſo good a God, ſo ſweet a Maſter, ſo tender a Father, who has ſo ſtrong a Title to my Love. I again crave Pardon of thee, through Jeſus Chriſt thy Son, and beg thee to accept the *Sacrifice*, I deſign all my Life to offer thee, of *an humble Spirit and contrite Heart.*

Reſolutions, and a Prayer to beg Grace, to put them in Execution.

I Have taken my Reſolution: I begin this very Moment. Almighty God, who haſt wrought this Change, help me

to go through with what thou haſt inſpir'd me. What is there in this World that can be of Force to ſeparate and diſunite my Heart from thee, or to extinguiſh in my Breaſt the Love thou haſt kindled therein? I will be thine my God. I will never forget thy holy Law. I will make it my Buſineſs to learn thy Commandments, to make them the Subject of my Meditation, and the Rule and Principle of my Actions. I will hate Sin, and avoid it as I would a Serpent. I will ſhun all dangerous Occaſions which lead to it, and decline the very Appearance of all that's Evil. Quicken'd by a Senſe of Gratitude and the Motions of thy Love, I will live only for thee. I will hate and avoid every thing that diſpleaſes thee. I will ſeek and embrace whatever is agreeable in thy Sight, and capable of recommending me to thy Favour.

But, Oh my God! do thou ſupport and aid me in theſe holy Reſolutions, lead me in the Ways of thy Commandments, and ſuffer not Iniquity to get the Aſcendant over me. When I made myſelf my own Guide, I loſt myſelf. I ſhall wander again and loſe myſelf if thou forſak'ſt me. Without thee I can do nothing. 'Tis in thee that I ground my whole Confidence. Prevent me

from returning to my former Sins, leſt my *latter Eſtate* prove *worſe* than my *former*. Grant that I receive not thy Grace in vain; and, to finiſh thy Work, give me for the Remainder of my Days, that Sorrow which takes its riſe from thee, and which working in my Soul a permanent Repentance, may guide me to eternal Happineſs. *Amen.*

Prayers before Communion.

An Act of Faith and Adoration.

LORD JESUS! *I believe, help my Unbelief.* I believe thou art preſent in this moſt venerable Sacrament: I believe that in receiving it I receive, not Bread, but thy ſacred Body and Blood; thy Soul and Divinity; nay, *thyſelf*, whole and entire, under theſe ſenſible Appearances which inform my Eyes. Full of this Faith, I adore what I am about to receive; and in ſo doing, I know 'tis my Creator, my Saviour, my Sovereign Good, my Lord and my God, whom I adore. I believe thou art in this Sacrament, in order to give eternal Life to thoſe that receive thee worthily; and with this Diſpoſition, I earneſtly deſire to approach. But they that come unworthily to it, eat and drink their own

Judgment. As this is an Article of my Faith, ſo it is a Subject of Fear and Trembling, whenever I venture to approach to thy holy Table. But, Lord, do thou increaſe my Faith, that *diſcerning* as I ought thy Body, I may *partake* of thy Grace, and be *filled* with thy Spirit. *Amen.*

An Act of Humility and Contrition.

"LORD, I am notworthy, that thou "ſhouldſt come under my Roof." Proſtrate in thy Sight, I confeſs myſelf unworthy to approach, and it is not without Fear and Trembling that I come to thee. Miſerable as I am, a poor deſpicable Creature, mere Duſt and Aſhes, how unworthy muſt I needs be to feed on the Bread of Angels, and receive my Creator and my God! But this my Unworthineſs is yet the greater, by reaſon of the Number and Enormity of my Sins. I hope thou haſt forgiven them; but ſtill I tremble for them, and in a deep Regret for having committed them, I acknowledge myſelf unworthy to ſit at thy Table among thy Children: Nay, I muſt confeſs, that to be treated as thy Servant, is above my Deſerts. I wiſh I could make ſome Amends for my Unworthineſs, by the Fervour of

my Devotion? But, alas! I am ſenſible how far I fall ſhort of that Zeal and Fervour, and thoſe Diſpoſitions which I ought to bring. "Lord, I am not "worthy that thou ſhouldſt come un- "der my Roof, but only ſpeak the Word, "and my Soul ſhall be healed."

An Act of Deſire and Love of God.

O My Lord and God, how earneſtly do I deſire to be united to thee in the holy Communion! *My Fleſh and my Heart have fail'd me*, out of a Longing to receive thee. Is it poſſible thou ſhouldſt vouchſafe to beſtow thyſelf on me? Not content to have become Man, to have labour'd and ſuffer'd beyond Expreſſion, and even died for my ſake, thou moreover feed'ſt me with thy ſacred Fleſh, and in ſome Manner becomeſt one and the ſame Body and Blood with me. What greater Inſtance canſt thou give me of thy Love? Or canſt thou in a more expreſs and pathetic Manner command a Return of Love? I will therefore love thee; nay, now I love thee, with my whole Heart, with my whole Mind, with all my Soul, and with all my Strength. Methinks, from thy Altar and thy holy Sacrament, thou aſkeſt me, as thou didſt St. *Peter*, *whether I love thee?* and love thee *more than others* whom

thou ſuffer'ſt not ſo frequently to come to thee! And I am going to thy holy Table, as thou didſt to the Place where thou began'ſt thy Paſſion, to convince the World, that I love my God and my Father; and that I do as he has commanded.

Prayers After Communion.

An Act of Thankſgiving.

"WHAT Return ſhall I make the "Lord, for all the good Things "he has given me?" He has lov'd me, and lov'd to that Degree, as to die for me. He has juſt now given me himſelf, and by this Gift he repleniſhes me with Graces, and fits me for eternal Life. "O my Soul, bleſs the Lord! let every "Thing that is in me, bleſs his holy "Name. O my Soul, bleſs the Lord! "and never forget the Favours he has "done thee." *Holy Mary!* "bleſſed be the Fruit of thy Womb," Jesus, and do you bleſs and thank him on my behalf. Do you the ſame, all you celeſtial Spirits, who ſee and enjoy him Face to Face. I bleſs thee, O my God, and thank thee with all my Heart. I ſee by the Light of Faith, the Greatneſs of the Gift thou haſt made me. I confeſs it is infinitely above my Merits, and that I am wholly indebted for it to thy Grace and

Mercy. It ſenſibly affects my Soul with Joy and Gratitude, which I'll endeavour to expreſs by the whole Tenour of my Life. I will never ceaſe from thanking thee, by an ardent Charity, and a Deſire and Care not to ſpeak the leaſt Word, nor do the leaſt Action, but what may be agreeable in thy Sight.

Reſolutions.

WHEN *Zacheus* had the Honour to receive thee, my Saviour, into his Houſe, he ſhew'd his Gratitude by a Reſolution, inſtantly taken in thy Preſence, of beſtowing one half of his Riches on the Poor, and of repairing the Injuſtices done to his Neighbour, by returning four times the Value of what he had taken. After this very Manner I deſign, by thy Grace, to pay thee my Acknowledgments. Here in thy Preſence, I make the Reſolution of ſatisfying for my paſt Sins, by the Practice of the contrary Virtues; and of diſcharging all the Duties thou haſt laid upon me. To this Effect, I renew my Baptiſmal Obligations, and the good Purpoſes I made upon receiving, in the Sacrament of Penance, the Remiſſion of my Sins. It ſhall not be forgotten, that I ſat at thy holy Table, and fed upon thy ſacred Body. I will remember this, that I may decline whatever

whatever would render me unworthy for the future. I have tasted, in this Sacrament, how sweet thou art; and it shall be the Pleasure of my Life, frequently to taste of this delicious Banquet. I'll account it a Misfortune and a Misery, to be kept at a Distance from it; and my Preparation for the well receiving of so great a Blessing, shall be by inflam'd Desires, assiduous Prayer, and a Life of Innocence. I will live, or rather I will live no longer, but thou, my Jesus! shalt live in me.

An Oblation.

O My God! how thy Love transports me! Thou hast been graciously pleas'd to bestow thyself on me; what then can be more just, than for me to make a return of myself, and to dedicate my Life to thee? There's all the Reason in the World to hope, that feeding and living upon thee, I should no longer live to myself, but to thee; who didst die and rise again for me. By thy Mercy I beseech thee therefore, that the Offering, which I make thee of myself, may find Acceptance in thy Sight. I offer thee my Body, and now that thou sanctifiest it by thy Presence, I may dare to call it a pure and holy and living Sacrifice, a Sacrifice agreeable to thy Majesty. I

offer

offer thee my Heart, in order that, by loving and fearing thee, it may hate and deteſt Sin;—my Memory, to call to Mind thee and thy Mercies;—my Eyes, to read thy holy Word;—my Ears, to hear it;—my Tongue and Mouth to ſing thy Praiſes, and to receive again thy ſacred Body;—my Hands, to do good Works;—my Feet, to walk in the Ways of thy Commandments;—all that I am, in fine, to be an Inſtrument in thy Hands of Purity and Juſtice. I reſign myſelf with all my Heart, to thy holy Pleaſure. I accept of all the Diſpenſations of thy Providence. I neither aſk for Life nor Death; for Health nor Sickneſs; for Poverty nor Riches. *May thy Will*, O my God! *be done*, not mine.

A Petition.

THOU art in me, O Lord, do not leave me. What can'ſt thou refuſe me, when thou haſt given me thyſelf? Give me an Increaſe of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Enable me to love what thou haſt commanded; to deſire what thou haſt promis'd. "Give me what thou commandeſt; and command what thou pleaſeſt." Dwell in me by thy Grace; and make me to dwell in thee by a Love of thee,—by an Obedience to thy Orders—

Orders—and by keeping faithfully to the Ways thou haſt walk'd in before me. Protect me. Preſerve me from all Sin, and provide me with all the Neceſſaries of Body and Soul, both for this Life, and for that which is to come.

What I aſk for myſelf, I do likewiſe aſk, O my God! for all the Faithful; and in particular for my Kindred, my Friends, and for my *Enemies*, if I ſhould have *any*. Give to each, all neceſſary Graces. Let them know and do thy Will. Thou art *with thy Church*, and wilt be always with her, as thou haſt promis'd, *to the End of the World*. Watch over,—guide and preſerve her,—in Peace and Unity. Provide her with Prieſts and Paſtors, according to thine own Heart. Preſerve thoſe thou haſt given her, and by the Gifts of thy Holy Spirit make them worthy Miniſters of the New Covenant. Bleſs the Juſt with Perſeverance, and an Increaſe of thy Love and Grace. Convert Sinners. Enlighten Infidels. Comfort the Afflicted. Give Light and Reſt eternal to the Faithful departed. Yes, my God, I dare aſk thee any thing, I dare pray for all Perſons whatſoever, now that thou haſt made thyſelf all mine.

Aſpira-

Aſpirations proper to be uſed on the Day of Communion, and for ſome Days following.

" MY Beloved is mine, and I am his. " He is delighted with Lilies: he " loves Purity." *Cant.* 2.

" I have found Jeſus Chriſt the Object " of my Love: I'll keep him as a Trea- " ſure, he ſhall never leave me." *Cant.* 3.

" Who can ſeparate me from the " Love of Jeſus." *Rom.* 8.

" How came I to be ſo happy as to " have my Lord come to me!" *Luc.* 2.

" Lord! what is it that thou would'ſt " have me do?" *Acts* 9.

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE, UPON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

COMMANDMENT I.

Concerning FAITH.

HAVE I wilfully doubted of any Point of Faith?

Held an Heretical Opinion, and declar'd it by Words, or any other Sign?

Outwardly profeſs'd Hereſy by any Action, as by going to the Sermons or Meetings of Hereticks?

Delay'd to embrace the true Faith, out of human Reſpects, Intereſt, Fear, &c.?

Examin'd with Curioſity divine Myſteries, or the Secrets of Providence?

Expos'd

Expos'd myself to Danger of loſing my Faith, by attending to the Diſcourſes of Libertines, or Hereticks, by Diſputing with them; or by reading their Books without Neceſſity, and without ſuch a Stock of Learning, as might ſecure me from being deluded by them?

Been negligent in reſiſting Temptations contrary to Faith?

Been ignorant of Things neceſſary to Salvation: as of the chief Myſteries contain'd in the Creed; of the Lord's Prayer; of the Commandments of God and the Church; or of any Thing neceſſary to be known or done for the worthy Receiving of thoſe Sacraments, which I have already receiv'd, or ought to have receiv'd?

Been negligent in learning theſe Things; or in remembering them after I had learnt them?

Concerning HOPE.

HAVE I deſpair'd of my Salvation, believing that God would never pardon me; or that I could never mend my Life, nor work out my Salvation, with his Grace?

Preſum'd on God's Mercy; ſinning more freely by reaſon thereof; hoping that my Sins would be forgiven without doing Penance; reſolved to defer

doing Penance to the latter End of my Days; believing that I might be ſav'd without changing my wicked Life, or doing Good Works?

Put too great Confidence in my own Induſtry and Care, as to Things that concern either this Life or the next; and not rely'd, as I ought, on God's Providence?

Not call'd upon God in my Corporal or Spiritual Neceſſities?

Concerning the LOVE of God.

HAVE I been any conſiderable Time without exerciſing Acts of the Love of God?

Borne too much Love to Creatures?

Not made the Care of my Salvation my chief Buſineſs; and the Ground of my other Cares and Concerns?

Neglected good Inſpirations?

Not thank'd God for his Benefits, eſpecially for thoſe he has beſtow'd on me in particular?

Murmur'd againſt God in my Afflictions?

Preferr'd my Health, Pleaſure, Goods, or Friends, or any Creature, to the Love of God?

Been uneaſy, tepid, or negligent in Things

Things relating to God's Honour or Service?

Been glad to ſee others offend God?

Concerning the Virtue of RELIGION.

HAVE I omitted my Prayers, and not ador'd God for a conſiderable Time?

Been wilfully, or out of Negligence diſtracted at my Prayers?

Omitted my Morning or Evening Prayers; or Grace before and after Meat, through Shame or Indevotion?

Contemn'd, laugh'd at, or jeſted upon the Ceremonies of the Church, the Images or Reliques of Saints, the Word of God, Catechiſms, Sermons, Sacraments, Prieſts, and devout and virtuous Perſons?

Us'd any Superſtitions and vain Obſervations, to cure myſelf or others of any Diſeaſe, or for any other End?

Had my Fortune told, and given credit to it?

Conſulted Conjurers, or Fortune-Tellers, or plac'd any Confidence in their Art?

Given credit to Dreams?

Obſerv'd lucky, or unlucky Days?

Invok'd the Devil, or made any Contract or Bargain with him?

Made uſe of Characters, Notes, Writ-

ings, Papers, or other Things to avoid any Miſchance, or ſuch like Effects?

Made uſe of holy Things, as Holy Water, *&c.* for any ſuperſtitious End?

Us'd the Words of Holy Scripture in Jeſt, or in any profane Manner?

Commandment II.

HAVE I ſworn what I knew or doubted to be falſe?

Sworn, promis'd upon Oath, or vow'd to *do an ill Thing*; and afterwards *done it*, which is *a double Sin*?

Swore, or promis'd upon Oath, what I never deſign'd to perform?

Not perform'd any lawful Thing, which I had ſworn to do?

Been accuſtom'd to ſwear without Neceſſity, not conſidering whether what I ſwore was true or falſe?

Sworn by way of Execration, curſing myſelf, or my Neighbour, wiſhing my own or his Damnation, Death, *&c.*

Blaſphem'd God or his Saints?

Nam'd with Contempt and Blaſphemy, the Blood, Wounds, Life, Death, *&c.* of the Son of God?

Taken pleaſure in hearing others curſe, ſwear, or blaſpheme; or provoked them to it? Or not reprehended them when I ought?

Not

Not perform'd my Vows, or deferr'd the Performance of them too long, or without lawful Excuſe?

Commandment III.

To which may be reduc'd the Command-ment of the Church, which obliges us to ſanctify Holy-days, and to hear Maſs on Sundays *and Holy-days.*

HAVE I upon *Sundays* or Holy-days not heard a whole Maſs; or heard it without Attention, being wilfully diſ-tracted, or talking to any Body?

Neglected to ſend my Children or Servants to hear Maſs upon theſe Days; or employ'd them in any Thing that has hinder'd them?

Been conſiderably negligent in aſ-ſiſting at Veſpers, Sermons, and Cate-chiſms?

Not ſanctify'd theſe Days in reading, praying, *&c.* or not taken care, that thoſe under my charge ſhould ſanctify them?

Wrought, or made others work without a lawful Cauſe? and how long?

Bought or ſold without Neceſſity?

Spent the greateſt Part of theſe Days in Idleneſs, in Drinking, in forbidden Games, or in profane Buſineſs?

Been at the Tavern or Ale-Houſe;

eſpecially in the Time of Divine Service?

Commandment IV.

For Children.

HAVE I diſpleas'd and offended my Father or Mother, or others who have charge over me, by Words, or any other Way?

Not lov'd them, but nouriſh'd ſome private Hatred againſt them? deſir'd their Death, or any other Harm?

Struck or threaten'd them?

Slighted their Reprehenſions, or reſiſted their Corrections?

Put them into a Paſſion, and not taken care to pacify them?

Diſobey'd them in any conſiderable Matter, or even in ſmall Matters; had a Contempt of their Perſons?

Deſpis'd them in their Poverty or Misfortunes?

Not aſſiſted them when they were Sick, or in Want?

Hinder'd them from making their Will, or fail'd to put it in Execution?

Been negligent in praying for them, either alive or dead; or in procuring the Prayers of others for them?

For

For Parents.

HAVE I deferr'd the Baptiſm of my Children too long, out of Negligence, or any human Reſpect?

Neglected to inſtruct them in Things neceſſary for Salvation?

Not taken care that they ſay their Prayers, frequent the Sacraments, and comply with the other Duties of Chriſtianity?

Not kept a ſtrict Watch over their Behaviour; nor corrected and chaſtis'd them for their Faults?

Commanded, or taught them any Harm?

Given them bad Example, by Swearing, Drunkenneſs, unchaſte Words and Actions, or by any other Sins?

Not taken care to keep them out of bad Company, or permitted them to lie in the ſame Bed with others, with Danger of Immodeſty?

Hinder'd, or endeavour'd to hinder them from ſerving God, out of an irregular Affection for them?

Anger'd them, either by uſing them ill, or by chaſtiſing them without Diſcretion, or by unjuſtly preferring one before the reſt?

Hated, or curſed them, or deſired their Death?

Not

Not taken care to put them to ſome Employment, or to provide for them?

Forc'd them to be Prieſts or Nuns, or to marry?

Hinder'd them, without Cauſe, from entering into a Religious Order?

For Mothers.

HAVE I, when with Child, expos'd myſelf to Danger of Miſcarriage, by heavy Burthens, or by any other immoderate Labour?

Let my Children lie in the ſame Bed with me, with danger of hurting them?

For married Perſons.

HAVE I fail'd in Fidelity, Love, or Deference; or in any other Duty of the marriage State?

Separated without juſt and legal Cauſe?

Been Jealous without reaſonable Grounds?

Us'd reproachful Language? hated or neglected my Wife or Huſband?

Not help'd or ſupported one another in our Infirmities or Neceſſities?

Refus'd Obedience to my Huſband where it was due, or pretended to overrule him?

Run him into Debt by my too great Expences?

Manag'd

Manag'd ill the Houſhold Affairs?

Been backward in Condeſcenſion to my Wife, where it was allowable?

Treated her baſely and unworthily?

For Servants.

HAVE I obey'd my Maſter or Miſtreſs in an ill Thing, out of Flattery or Compliance?

Made them angry?

Deſpis'd them?

Diſobey'd them in any conſiderable Matter?

Reveal'd their Secrets?

Been indolent in their Service, and endamag'd them by my Negligence?

Robb'd them, or let their Goods periſh, or gave them away without their Knowledge?

For Maſters and Miſtreſſes.

HAVE I not taken care that my Servants were well inſtructed, in Things neceſſary to Salvation?

Not allowed them Time and Convenience of hearing Maſs on *Sundays* and Holy-days, or of receiving the Sacraments?

Not taken care of them in their Sickneſs, both as to their ſpiritual and corporal Neceſſities?

Not

Not kept a ſtrict Watch over their Behaviour?

Nor reprehended and corrected them when they have offended God by Words, Actions, or Omiſſions againſt their Duty?

Commanded, or taught them any Evil; or induced them to ſin by my bad Example?

Injur'd, beaten, or us'd them ill without Reaſon, or through Anger?

Overburden'd them with Work above their Strength?

Commandment V.

Have I deſir'd my own Death, or endeavoured to kill myſelf?

Expos'd myſelf to Danger of Death, without Neceſſity?

Beaten, wounded, or kill'd my Neighbour; or procur'd it by others?

Given, taken, or counſelled that which might cauſe a Miſcarriage?

Challeng'd any one, or accepted a Challenge to a Duel, or gone to the Place appointed, or boaſted of it, or been any one's Second?

Not given Alms when I thought, or ought to have thought myſelf oblig'd to it?

Not aſſiſted my Neighbour in his great or extreme Neceſſity, when I was able? Ex-

Expos'd myſelf wilfully to an evident Danger of ſinning?

Cauſed the ſpiritual Death of my Neighbour: 1*ſt*. By doing an evil Action, or what is eſteem'd to be ſo, in his Preſence; and more eſpecially, if it be done, with a Deſign to ſtir him up to ſin. 2*dly*. By compelling him to Evil by ſome Force. 3*dly*. By giving Aid or Aſſiſtance toward a wicked Action, by Money or otherwiſe. 4*thly*. By harbouring or concealing bad People, that they may not be diſcover'd or puniſh'd. 5*thly*. By ſharing in any Evil, whether in the Action or the Profit ariſing from it. 6*thly*. By not hindering Evil when I might. 7*thly*. By teaching him Evil which he knew not before. 8*thly*. By commanding, counſelling, threatening, or otherwiſe provoking him to Evil. 9*thly*. By approving evil Actions, and praiſing them who did them. 10*thly*. By bragging of Sins which I have, or have not committed. 11*thly*. By not giving fraternal Correction, and charitable Admonitions for the preventing of Evil?

Been impatient when Things happen'd contrary to my Inclinations?

Suffer'd myſelf to be carry'd away by the Motions of Wrath?

Wiſh'd my Neighbour any Harm out

of

of Hatred or Revenge? Or taken Pleasure in the Thoughts thereof?

Borne him any Hatred, and how long?

Offended him by injurious Words, Deriſion, or quarrelling with him?

Contemn'd him in my Heart, or in Words?

Not been pardon'd or reconcil'd to him?

Not ſeen, ſpoken to, nor ſaluted him, after I had ſeem'd to pardon him?

Not endeavour'd, either by myſelf or others, to ſatisfy him, and be reconciled to him, when I have offended him?

Envy'd him; been ſorry for the Good, or glad of the Harm which befel him?

Commandments VI. *and* IX.

HAVE I committed any Sin againſt Modeſty or Chaſtity, in thought or *voluntary* Imaginations, Deſires, Looks, Words, Songs, Diſcourſe, or Actions?

Sinn'd with any other?

☞ *The Penitent may deſire his Confeſſor to inſtruct him farther, when 'tis neceſſary in theſe Particulars.*

HAVE I been at Plays, Balls, or Operas, with Danger of my Chaſtity?

Dreſs'd

Dreſs'd myſelf after a wanton or immodeſt Faſhion?

Made, or kept immodeſt Pictures, or Statues?

Read, or made others read, immodeſt Books?

Tranſgreſs'd the Rules of Modeſty, or not kept the Marriage-bed undefiled?

Commandments VII. *and* X.

HAVE I deſir'd my Neighbour's Goods unjuſtly?

Taken or ſtolen any Thing, and how much?

Wrong'd my Neighbour by Uſury, cheating, deceitful gaming, unjuſt Contracts; or by ſelling at too high, and buying at too low a Rate?

Caus'd any Damage to his Goods, and how great?

Hinder'd him from acquiring lawful Gain?

Been the Cauſe of his Loſs or Damage; by commanding, counſelling, or any of thoſe other ways already mentioned in the *Fifth Commandment*?

Refus'd or delay'd the Payment of my Debts, when I was able?

Endamag'd my Creditor by this Delay, and how much?

Refus'd, or delay'd to pay Workmen their Wages?

Detain'd Deeds, Papers, or any other Thing, unjuſtly, to the Prejudice of my Neighbour?

Undertaken, or maintain'd unjuſt Cauſes, or pleaded againſt my Conſcience?

Neglected to get the Knowledge and Skill, that is neceſſary for my Calling?

Put off falſe, or counterfeit Money?

Commandment VIII.

HAVE I borne falſe Witneſs (either in or out of Court of Juſtice) by ſpeaking againſt my Knowledge, or affirming what I knew not, or doubted of? And what Harm follow'd?

Brib'd Witneſſes, forg'd or produc'd falſe Deeds, conceal'd true Titles, counterfeited Aſſignments, &c.?

Told Lies, and upon what Motive?

Raſhly ſuſpected or judg'd ill of my Neighbour?

Slander'd my Neighbour, accuſing him either by Words or Writings, of an Evil he never did?

Made contumelious and defaming Libels or Songs?

Us'd my Neighbour ſpitefully, by upbraiding him with his Vices and Defects, or by reproaching him publicly and before others?

Inter-

Interpreted his good Actions in a bad Senſe, or his indifferent ones in the Worſe?

Diminiſh'd and leſſen'd his good Name, or not defended it when I was bound to do ſo?

Given Credit to Detractions, or taken pleaſure in hearing them?

Cauſing Diſcord and Miſunderſtanding betwixt Neighbours, by carrying Stories backwards and forward? what was the Conſequence?

Diſcover'd the ſecret Vices and Defects of my Neighbour? and to how many?

Reveal'd a Secret? and what Harm enſued?

Not ſpoken of another's Sin, when I was oblig'd?

Read another's Letter out of curioſity, or ſome other evil Motive?

On the Commandments of the Church.

☞ *The* Commandment *concerning hearing Maſs on* Sundays *and* Holydays, *has been already examin'd in the* Third *of the* Decalogue.

Have I paſs'd a whole Twelvemonth without going to Confeſſion?

Neglected examining my Conſcience, carefully, before I come to my Confeſſor?

Not had a true Sorrow, nor a firm Purpoſe of Amendment for my Sins?

Conceal'd a Mortal Sin, thro' Shame or Negligence?

Been negligent in doing the Penance enjoin'd me?

Not receiv'd the Bleſſed Sacrament at *Eaſter?*

Receiv'd it without due Faith, Humility, Reſpect, and Devotion?

Broken the Faſts commanded by the Church, either by not abſtaining from forbidden Meats, or by eating more than one Meal, or before the uſual Time?

Eaten too large Collations in Lent, the Ember Days, Vigils, &c.

Eaten, *or caus'd others to eat*, Fleſh on Days of Abſtinence, or any other prohibited food on faſting Days?

The Seven Capital Sins.

Have I deſir'd, or ſought after, the Eſteem of Men?

Said, or done any Thing with an Intent to gain human Applauſe?

Contemn'd or diſprais'd others, the more to exalt myſelf?

Boaſted of the Good I did not, or of the Evil I did?

Sought after Places, Offices, or Employments, for which I was not fit?

Exceeded

Exceeded in Cloaths, Furniture, Table-Expences, or other Things, to indulge Vanity, or gain Reſpect?

Made myſelf appear more virtuous, learned, or ſkilful, than I really am, for the ſame Intent?

Not acknowledg'd my Fault when guilty?

Maintain'd that I had done well, granting the Fact, or alledg'd falſe Excuſes and unjuſt Reaſons?

Been obſtinate in my own Opinion?

Deſir'd, *inordinately*, temporal Commodities and Advantages?

Fix'd my Thoughts and Cares ſo much upon the amaſſing of Riches, as to neglect the Service of God, the receiving of the Sacraments, and other Things neceſſary for Salvation?

Been unwilling, out of Covetouſneſs, to be at the neceſſary Expences for the Maintenance of my Family?

Been at exceſſive Charges in Gaming, Drinking, Furniture, Cloaths, Building, &c.

Spent in the Tavern or Ale-houſe, what was neceſſary for the Subſiſtence of my Family?

Slighted the Poor in their Neceſſities?

Refus'd, when in my Power, to lend to thoſe in Want?

Not given Alms, as I ought, according to my Condition?

Eaten or drank to Excefs, or yielded to Senfuality?

Deferr'd the Amendment of my Life; or by Inconftancy in my good Refolutions, immediately defifted, after having begun it.

Neglected the Means of Salvation, or of Chriftian Perfection, viz. the Sacraments, Prayer, good Works, &c.

Neglected the Duties of my Vocation?

Indulged myfelf in too much Eafe?

Chofen rather to do Nothing, than be employ'd in fome commendable Exercife?

Spent too much Time in Play, or ufelefs Employments?

☞ *The Reft of the Capital Sins have been examin'd in the Commandments.*



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